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E.TAL ADV



THE JERUSALEM  
**POST**

Wednesday, March 21, 1979

TRAVEL ABROAD

لقدنا من الاصل

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ETAL ADV.

הכרזה מן הארץ



Mickey Mouse in his Disneyland kingdom



(Walt Disney Productions)

Hard-hats take a lunch-break

(Alisa Auerbach)

## HAPPY PAPPIES & SOMBREROS

Extracts from diaries kept by TONY PITCH during a 30-day trip across the U.S. on Greyhound buses.

KENTUCKY. The grocer in Lexington, Kentucky straightened the tins on a shelf.

"You'll see plenty of poor whites in Hazard, son. They call 'em Happy Pappies. These folk don' wanna work. You got a job for 'em they won' take it. All they wanna do is make kids."

Three hours after leaving Lexington the Greyhound bus arrives in Hazard. It is very small and set in a beautiful hilly area. At a shabby hotel the manageress eyes me distrustfully when I ask her if she can direct me to the poor whites section.

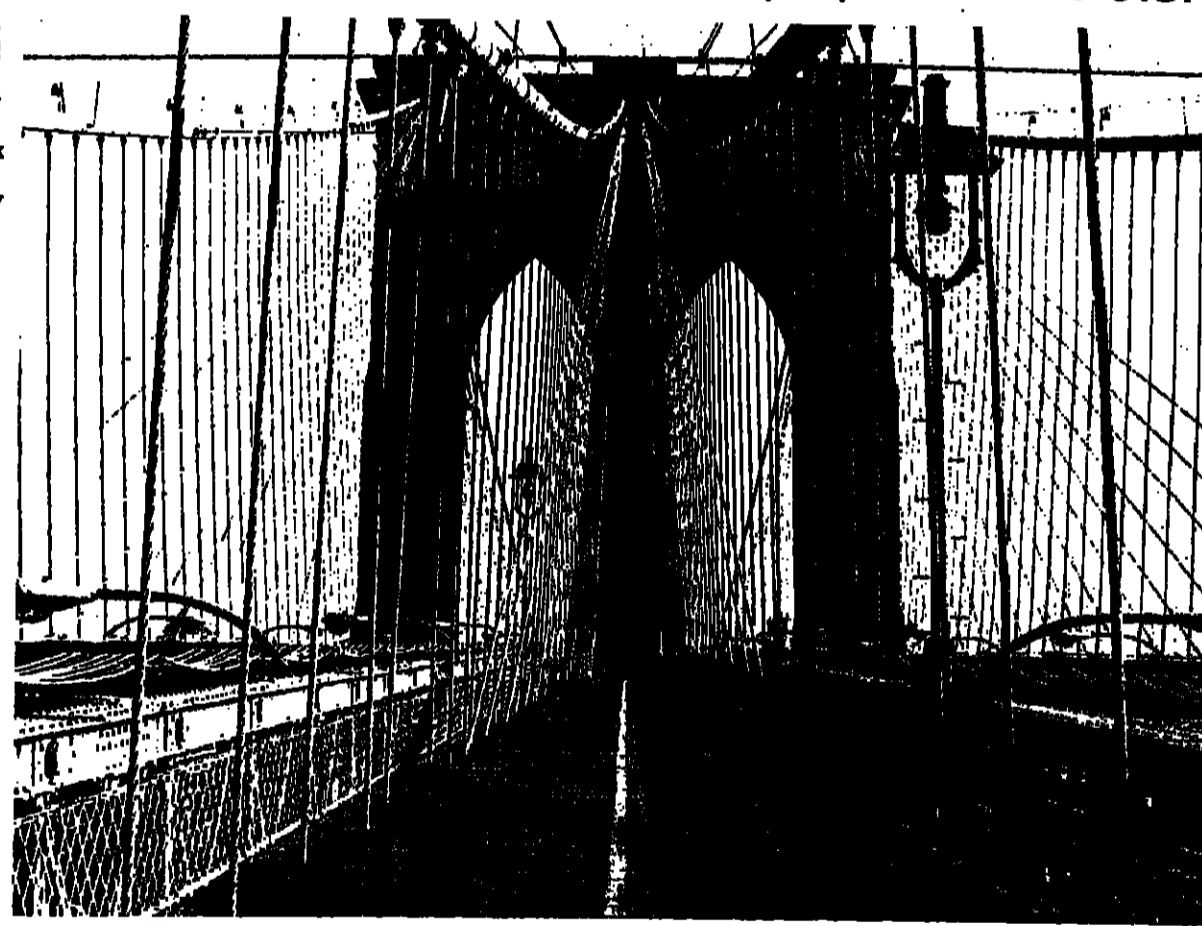
"What you wanna see them for? There's better people aroun', but if you insist, go on over across the Kentucky River fork over there," she says, "and cross the rail tracks."

Soon the scenery is dense with trees and creepers on the lower side of the mountain road. Some 200 yards down below is a cluster of wooden shacks. Foliage obscures most of the people sitting and talking animatedly on the porches.

A rifle shot cracks the silence in the heavily wooded hills but the poor whites carry on talking as if nothing happened. On the other side of the road is rustling coal mining equipment. I hear a car approaching and flag it down. It's a police car and I ask the two lawmen if they'd mind if I sit in the back to see the town's sites while they carry on with their patrol.

"Sure thing," says the plump one as I strain to catch the unfamiliar accent.

"Paipie have a bad image of Hazard," he says: a while later as he leans over the front seat while his buddy drives. "They think the poleeeds he-are fat-gutted tobacco-ohewin' illiterates. Ain't no. Everyone thinks we're so po' you ain't starvin' to death. But you ain't seen none of that, now have yuh? Course we gut our fair share. But things ain't so bad's they say. Hall, I don' know. We ain't starvin'. Ain't no reason anymore tuh paipie tuh starve here. Anyone kin buy a packet a seeds and grow food or (aters or-



Brooklyn Bridge

(Alisa Auerbach)

corn. We had TV men he-are. Walter Cronkite hissif. They took pitchers a some a thuh paipie eatin' tater peels. But hall, anyone'll do that tuh \$16 to have his pitcher taken. Damn it, if a man is starvin' that bad all he has to do is go to jail and git three good meals a day.

OSCAR COMBS, the bulky young journalist whom the police had asked to show me around, arrives early to pick me up. We head for the trail leading deep into the woods and he says Hazard has about 500 people who can be listed as very poor.

Oscar slows down to give two eighth-graders a lift. They're dressed in baggy trousers, are barefoot and carry slingshots. Their hair is cropped short and their faces look full of mischief.

"You ain't goin' north of the big creek?" one of them asks.

"Naw. You boys farmers?" Oscar asks for my benefit.

"Yuh."

"How come?"

"Jes 'bout everyone he-are grows corn."

"Yeah?"

"My daddy don' make me work too hard in the garden 'cause 'bout everyone of us gets food stamps."

"How many?"

"'Bout 198 month for the nine a us."

"Where you goin' now?"

"We goin' to th' grocery store."

"Is it far?"

"Quite a long way, but it's okay."

"Do you halve to go?"

"Yeah, but it's somethin' to do. We get away from the house."

"Do you walk a lot?"

"'Bout five miles every day."

"Okay, be seein' yuh."

"Right."

The road gets bumpy all the time. "Hall, these roads!" says Oscar. "Here's the problem: Either to move the mountayn paipie or build roads for them. Sometimes they live in inaccessible places. Other times there's too few a them to justify a road. Some a them were born here and will never leave. See, in the early days the farmers came here 'cause it was fertile land. Then they got competition in road transport with the mines. Then, when the miners wuz laid off, there were less markets for their crops and other produce."

We stop a while to look at a cluster of rickety, brown wooden shacks. They're dark inside and

the furniture is on the porch. Most of the roofs are warped and broken. There are outhouses and wells to draw up water. The houses are almost buried in the foliage of sugar maple trees and pines which give off an intoxicating fragrance. Oscar says the trees are heavy with snow in winter.

We look at the people in the houses and they return our stares, with the exception of one boy eating half a watermelon on the porch. He waves to us with a free hand. We wave back but the adults, with gaunt looks and frayed clothing, remain motionless. None of the kids has shoes. Chickens and ducks are pecking and scampering around. There are some out of slate cars and Oscar thinks they may be relatives who managed to break out of this environment and have since gotten good jobs. They're probably here only for the Fourth of July weekend.

"I had a friend when I wuz a very little boy," says Oscar as we resume our trip. "He lived in a po' neighbourhood and I'll tell yuh, yuh ain't heard nothin' till yuh heard rain on a tin roof!"

Oscar says most of these people grow corn, potatoes and string beans and raise chickens and hogs. "Every meal has taters. You can't starve he-are but I can understand why there's malnutrition."

The wheels spin in a muddy depression and two men and a woman, walking by the side of the road, stop to stare at us.

"When they gittin' a new road?" Oscar asks.

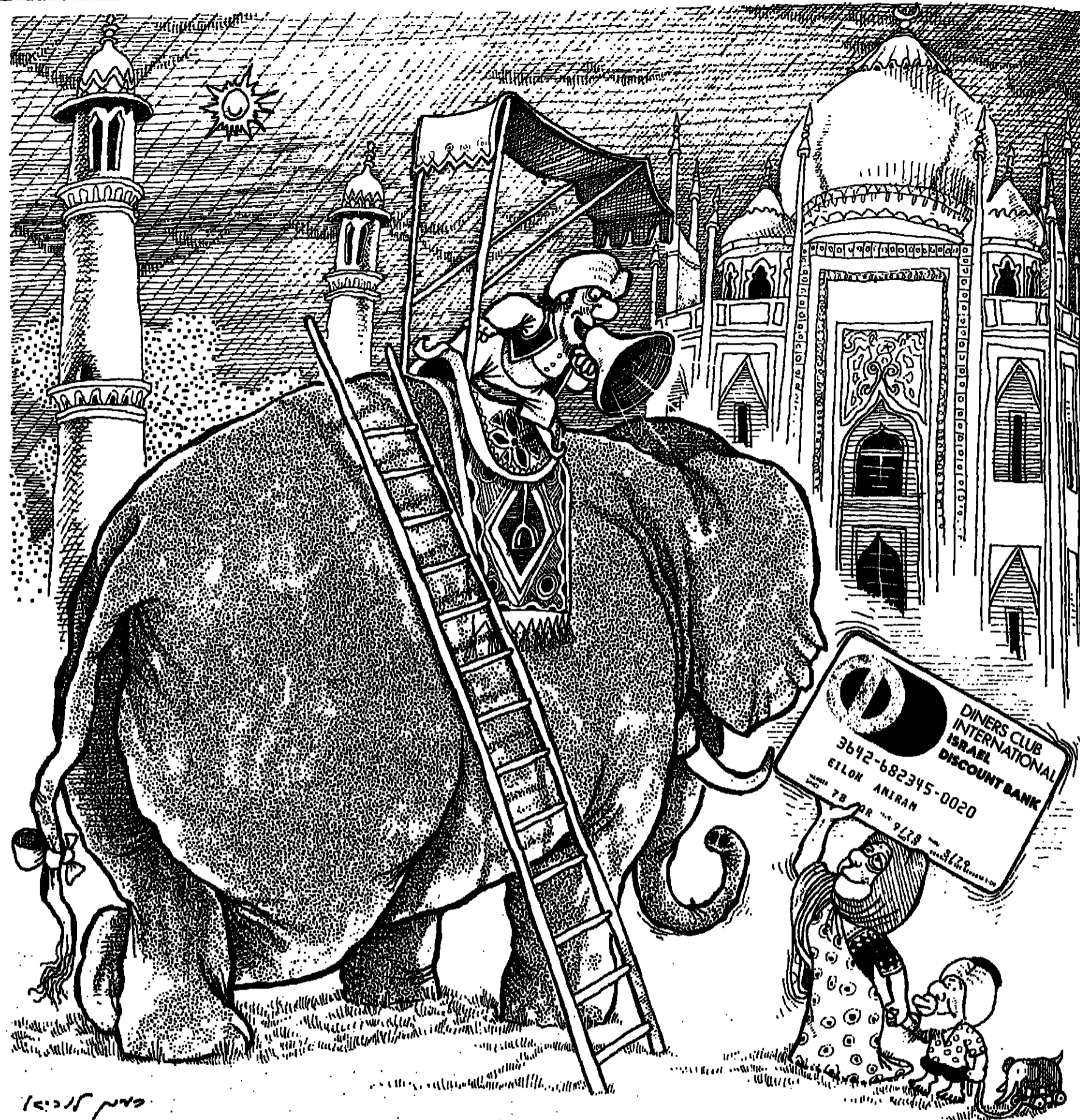
"Ain't never gonna be no road he-are," says a skinny man with pants ending at his shins.

"Well," says Oscar, "you seen enough?"

NEVADA. Smallish Reno is a jigsaw puzzle of neon-lit casinos, topless bars and "one-armed bandit" gambling saloons, advertised as the "biggest little city in the world." In one casino a money changer has time to talk.

"Some people are sick," he

(Continued on page 5)



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 The human side of the coin

(Continued from page 3)

groans. "They come in every day, staying all night. Once a woman dashed in and stole two purses another woman had put down. She escaped. Others have even tried to wreck machines, trying to pry them open to get at the money."

I walk around town a bit, stopping in at an office with a sign outside announcing "Weddings — Nevada Marriage Information." The drab female employee inside the flower-decorated room says it's a quiet day — "only four weddings." Normally they have 15 a day. Unlike the other states, Nevada has no residency laws, and the authorities here don't ask for blood tests from the couple applying to get married.

"I used to cry at the first 50 weddings," she continues. "Now and again I still do if they're in love."

She rubs her eyes, scratches her shoulder, looks down at her breasts and checks her fingernails.

"My mother owned this place and I've helped out since I was 14. And I've seen some things! We got all types — young and old, rich and poor. I was shocked at first but I'm used to it now. We had one hippie girl in here in a bikini. Her intended was in jeans and a shirt. But we decided not to allow that again. Then we have some communists from California who don't want to get married in a chapel or in any place where they hear the name of Jesus. We also get a lot more black and white weddings — mostly black men and white women from California. Oh yeah, once a girl came in in a T-shirt down to her thighs. She was barefoot and the minister asked her to get dressed. Know what she

Outdoor laundry in the Deep South

did? She got into high heels."

"Nevada gets 20 million tourists a year and of this, Reno gets 8 million. If it weren't for legal gambling we'd have nothing. We've got cattle ranching and they do the skinning close by. But most of the state revenues come from gambling."

At this moment a silver-haired man with a playboy profile comes in hand-in-hand with a hip girl at least 15 years younger. I'd like to stay but am politely asked to leave.

LOUISIANA. It's already hot and steamy when I set off at 7 a.m. for the French Quarter of New Orleans and then on Dauphin Street I ask a house painter how to get to the paddle boats on the Mississippi River.

"You wanna be careful here. This cotton pickin' place ain't no place be at night. See that fella with the billy goat beard and fuzzy, wavy hair? Wonder where he's goin'. He's sorta guy that come up right behind yuh 'n' knock yuh on a head and beat hell

outa yuh. Yessir, ain't no place be alone. They'll git yuh for a quarter same as a dime. Yuh bin here long?"

"Come last night."

"Man, I tell yuh, when I came here from Arkansas seven years ago place was awright. Now, since them dang niggers started this mixing business (churning the air with his hands) this 'ole place hasn't beena same. These hippies, whatever yuh call them, they moved in too. Tell yuh, five minutes ago, yuh see that girl



(Aliza Auerbach)

walked by here?"

"No."  
 "All she had on was pair panties or somethin'. No bras-ear, no sir. Just a little thing came back of her neck and hung down over her boobs. And she walkin' with a goddam nigger boy. Yeh. They git yuh right here. Right in Bourbon and Royal Streets too at night. They gut special po-leece here justa round up them hippies. These guys so hung up on drugs ain't no place be alone."

The French Quarter at night explodes in neon colour and salacious entertainment. The Quarter that masqueraded as a museum piece by day throws off the mask at night. And tourists, whose eyes have looked up by day to take in the architecture, now look at eye level at nude photographs in glass window display cases along Bourbon Street.

"Come on in people, no cover charge," a doorman solicits. Behind him are the photographs of Sheila Miss Boobs and Sandra Sexton, stripped to the last few sequins.

Some strollers look up to a window some 10 feet above street level and roar with laughter when a woman's legs break through the curtains, as if she were on a swing. Then they swing back.

"Are they fake?" asks one man.

"Sure wish they weren't," his buddy replies.

The legs swing back and forth, stopping the pedestrians for a few minutes of spontaneous guffawing.

Dixie jazz comes out in staccato beats from a window. Modern jazz is carried on the ribs of hot, sweaty air from one side of the street to the other. The doormen vie with each other to entice the

(Continued on page 6)

AMERICA is a magnet for Israelis — a land of opportunity where relatives and friends have found success and wealth.

Israelis are welcome as tourists in the U.S., and they are soon made to feel that they belong to that vital exciting family.

Those who visit New York are usually stunned by the sheer size of Manhattan.

The first sight for those landing in New York is the Statue of Liberty, a gift of the French Republic. Inside the base is a new American Museum of Immigration, which tells the story of the New World's development.

Windows in the statue's forehead provide a panoramic view of New York's soaring skyline, the Brooklyn Bridge, the mass of skyscrapers, and the World Trade Centre.

If time is short, the first day should be spent "Discovering America."

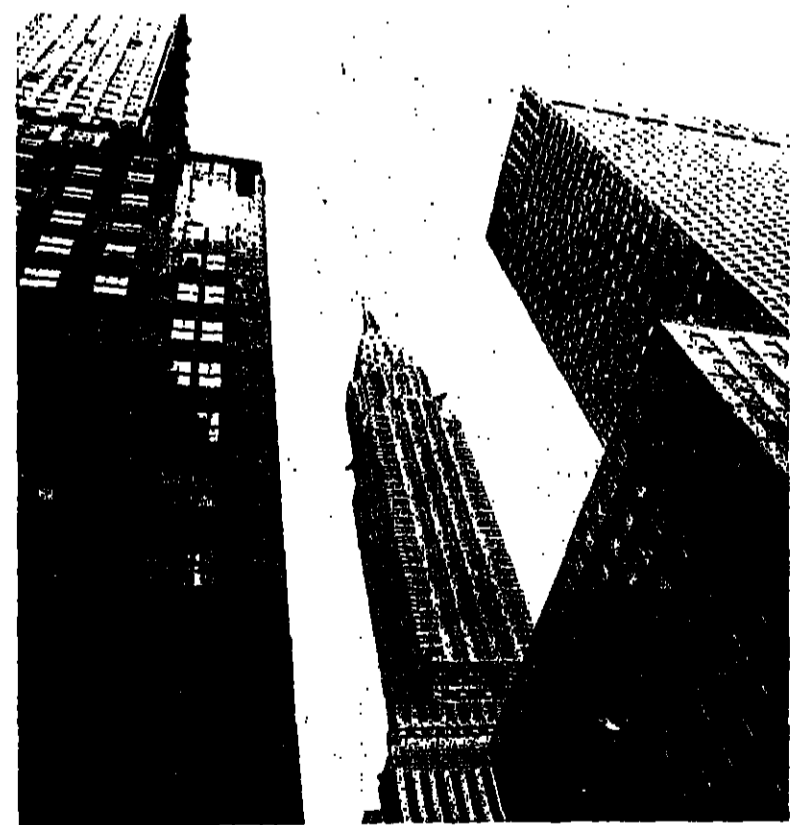
The UN building, the Time office, Rockefeller Centre, Radio City Music Hall and Central Park are but a taste of this immense city.

New York also abounds in museums — the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Natural History, the Frick Museum and, not far away, the Lincoln Centre and the Metropolitan Opera House. Seventh Ave., Fifth Ave., Park Ave., 44th St., Wall St., Broadway... every corner of New York has an exciting story to tell.

New York's ethnic make-up is also interesting. Chinatown, Harlem, Little Italy and other neighbourhoods will fascinate the tourist.

The golden rule for first-time visitors is to discard naivete — don't believe everyone's story.

## AMERICAN DREAM LAND



The Empire State Building

(Aliza Auerbach)

keep to busy streets, don't go down a subway alone, leave Central Park before sunset — and keep a close watch on your wallet.

As in Israel, eating out can be an adventure. The number of restaurants is large, service good and the prices reasonable. A first class meal can be had for \$10, although, of course, you can get far cheaper meals. The only real problem about eating out in New York is where — and how to stop.

The New York Convention and Visitors' Bureau, at 802 42nd St., NY 10017, provides information and details of tours and tour operators.

OUTSIDE New York, Boston, the gateway to New England, attracts many visitors. Rich in American history, Boston is a major business and learning centre. The Paul Revere Trail passes through Cambridge.

where Harvard, America's oldest university, is located.

New Jersey is "the shore" for hundreds of thousands of residents of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

New Jersey's 123-mile Atlantic shoreline is the longest stretch of white sand in the U.S. and is warmed by the Gulf Stream. Atlantic City is a must, and Coney Island and Sandy Hook are just some of the places that visitors should try to see.

After New England, New York and New Jersey, there is George Washington country — Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C. and Virginia.

In the south is Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee.

California is a favourite destination for Israelis. And California, first and foremost, means Los Angeles. LA is an escapist's dream: The Avenue of the Stars, Universal film studios, and Movie World.

And there's glamour: Beverly Hills, Sunset Boulevard, and Mann's Chinese Theatre.

But the Number One draw for tourists remains Disneyland, which has already attracted some 200 million visitors since it was opened in 1955. The land of Walt Disney is not cheap and one visit hardly suffices, so be prepared... expenses mount up and can easily average \$15 a person.

The Colorado River is one of the "new" attractions in the U.S. Shooting the rapids is fashionable these days. The scenery is breathtaking and the best way to see it is by jeep or raft.

If you are even harder, there

are seven-day "wilderness adventures," which include Canyonlands National Park and Cataract Canyon.

After San Francisco and San Diego, both very popular with visitors to the West Coast, another exciting city is Houston, the oil capital of the U.S. and the training and command post for American space flights.

Atlanta, state capital of Georgia, is a centre for just about everything... industry, finance, education. And, more recently, it has become a rival of Las Vegas, with many casinos and new hotels going up.

Of course, one city not to be missed is Washington, DC, the capital.

For a panoramic view of the city, go to the top of the Washington Memorial. Then, get on one of the special mini-buses, called Tourmobiles, and take a trip around the city. There are also boat trips up the Potomac.

But first things first and that means visiting the White House, the Capitol, and the Ford Theatre (where Lincoln was assassinated). The FBI building attracts more and more visitors, as does the Smithsonian Institution, one of the 11 leading "think tanks" in the U.S.

Travel agents are already besieged by intending travellers to the U.S., and the U.S. visa offices in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are crowded with Israelis trying to get visas.

Getting there: El Al and TWA are the only airlines offering direct flights to the U.S. The 6-80 day group fare starts at IL18,000 return. El Al will soon commence flights to Miami and Chicago (Apex fares IL14,105 and IL14,307, respectively). □ Baruch Saville

(Continued from page 5)

tourists into the Gunga Den, the Playgirl Club, the Oyster Bar, Steve Valent's Paddock Lounge, Blue Angel, the Vieux Carré Restaurant, Club Hoty Toty....

"All girl shows, see the caged queen!"

A doorman opens the portals to a club. "Now you're gonna see her again... little Miss Candyball." Then he closes the door. Canal Street is almost deserted. On my way back well after midnight a drunk lies sprawled before the door of a plush office building. Poky bars are patronized by the poor and the inebriate. They've given up the fight and are carried along on streams of liquid, their sole remaining props being the bar stools and the wooden counters.

"Hey mister, how's about a dime, eh? You gotta dime for me?"

"Sorry."

"Whazza matter w/ ya? Don't like us?"

One of them hauls himself off the sidewalk and blocks my path.

"The man asked for a dime mister. You got a dime for him?"

I duck and run. His cursing follows me up the street of small, abandoned shops with broken windows and shattered glass fronts.

TEXAS/MEXICO. I walk towards the border from El Paso, Texas and pay a few cents to cross the Paso Del Norte Bridge into Juarez, Mexico. Mexican children are swimming in the muddy, harnessed waters of the Rio Grande forming the border between the two countries.

The scene is one of stark poverty, highlighted by the juxtaposition of the affluent Americans just over the bridge. The shops look like an Arab bazaar. Dealers stand on the doorsteps beckoning Americans inside to buy the copper, brass, chocolate-box art, ironware, leatherware, shoes, ponchos, agate stone and glassware.

Next to a "dentista" a man plays a trumpet while a child bangs drums. Music is amplified from one shop to the pedestrian traffic outside. Long bus queues form. A man cools himself by waving his shirt tails up and down. Short police in khaki uniforms swagger down the sidewalk, pistols in their holsters. I feel like a giant among these small people, many of whom are no more than 5 ft. tall.

Beat-up autos cruise through the winding, narrowing streets. It looks like all of America's second-hand cars have been traded in this town. Hooters blare on the slightest pretext.

The grass on the main square, dominated by a cathedral, is eroded from the thousands of shoes that have trodden over it. Sounds of an accordion filter from somewhere. Sombreros make these small men look like caricatures.

Inside the cathedral an old drum stands to one side for cash donations. About 50 people are praying silently. They stare mutely at the altar being cleaned by an old man. A life-size statue of Jesus, dressed in white lace, lies in a glass-enclosed case at the back of the pews. Stimulated streaks of blood run down his

cheeks and exposed, upturned arms. A man touches the glass where one of Jesus' hands is open. The worshipper then kisses the hand that touched the glass enclosing his Redeemer.

Outside, near the square, a chocolate-brown Indian sits on a stone plinth of a street-corner building. He has Amazonian-length hair. His bare feet are in old leather sandals. The Indian looks like time immemorial — so ancient that his body must have been washed up after days in a polluted river and left to bake in a scorching sun before being discovered. He sits and stares at the people in the square.

A woman old enough to be a grandmother strums a guitar. She plays the same chord, sometimes in a different key. Some passersby drop coins by her feet. A young boy with a falsetto voice offers cucarachas for sale.

A woman walks past with black lace covering her head. Beggars wait patiently for others to part with coins. Two American nuns get into a Chevrolet van with Texas plates. A sticker on the front window carries the names of Jesus and Mary. Church bells peal some blocks away but the sounds reverberate.

I cross the bridge into America and border officials tell me thousands of Mexicans live in Juarez but work daily in El Paso. They provide cheap labour and ineffective unions. The cheap labour has led to one of the world's largest garment manufacturers setting up in El Paso.

KANSAS. The former mayor sitting in the urban renewal office told me how Dodge City came to be located where it is. In the far off days there was a Federal law forbidding the sale of whiskey within five miles of a Federal Army Post. Fort Dodge was classified as a Federal Army Post. Then a man named George Hoover, "one of the first traders in prairie land before the Santa Fe railroad came," arrived in the area with two barrels of whiskey. When he found out about the Federal Law he measured the circumference of a wagon wheel, calculated how many turns it would take to cover five miles, tied a rag onto the wheel and counted the revolutions required to cover the distance. When he'd done five miles he took the bung out of the whiskey barrel and started selling. When George Hoover died he'd already become a big merchant and he left \$100,000 in a trust fund for Dodge City.

The brick buildings remaining from the days of Sheriff Bat Masterson and lawyer Wyatt Earp had recently been knocked down as they were fire traps in a run-down area. Now, some 400,000 tourists come each year to see the replicas built on Front Street.

At this moment Paul walked in, 27 years old and 6'4". He told me he'd bought up half the bricks from the old buildings, spending \$80 for every thousand bricks. Then he'd sprayed each Front Street brick with a plastic preservative, numbered and registered the bricks at the Dodge City Marshall's office, and sold them to tourists for \$4.98 each.

"Like to come around town with me? I've got time on my hands today," says Paul.

We arrive at the livestock auction and go into a covered amphitheatre where the cattlemen are sitting around in cowboy hats and boots, bidding for the animals being led into the arena. The men doing the bidding have their feet up on the chairs in

front of them. The air is thick with cigarette smoke. When they bid they hardly change their expressions. There is a secret understanding between them and the auctioneer.

I ask a rancher how he can differentiate between a good and a badly built animal. He takes a toothpick out of his mouth to peer intently at what he's pried from his teeth.

"They need a broad back and big bones," he draws. "They're good if you just look at them and they square out. Know what I mean? Well, son, they're like women. You don't have to look twice. You know the first time. Some of them are big and some small, like Vietnamese are small and Scandinavians are big."

"And Texans," I add.

"Naw, that's all bull talk."

WE MOVE on to the slaughterhouse "to see that blood's still flowing in Dodge City," according to Paul. We watch the cattle being led from the pens up a ramp where they're shot in pairs above the eyes. While I'm looking an employee tells me the dry smell of blood in the hot breeze is like perfume to him.

"I slept next to a dead cow and saw a lot of blood in my 26 years in the army," he says with a grin that bares his yellowing teeth.

"Now we'll go and see Boot Hill," says Paul.

It's a very small cemetery at the top of an uphill walk close to the centre of town; it's enclosed by a white picket fence and wagon wheels. Here the wild westerners were buried early in the morning and at sunset.

The tombstones are painted with all the information needed by tourists. Many of the other bodles were moved to another graveyard in 1879. In the far corner of the cemetery there's the Hangman's Tree — with five leafless branches twisting out agonizingly. Below it are the tombstones of three horse thieves — the Unknown Kid, Harry Callaghan and Alexander Cole — all hanged here in 1882. Nearby is a tombstone to "Cactus Pete Parker. They say curiously will kill a cat. To you, my friends, to pry into my life is just a tad. It doesn't matter how I died. I gave life all I had."

The other tombstones are inscribed to: "Mysterious Dave Barker — killed 1873. His true name and background died with him."

"Indian Charlie. Killed 1876 — crazed by whiskey, he was shot to death after killing a small boy."

"Texas Jack White. Killed 1878. Caught running guns to the Indians, was tied to a tree and tortured."

"Toothless Neil (Allee Chauba). Killed 1876 in a dance hall brawl."

BACK AT the urban renewal office the receptionist tells me she comes from Parker City, Oklahoma and has been in Dodge about three years.

"I like to think of myself as a cowgirl," she smiles, "but I can't wear my cowgirl outfit here without people staring at me all the time."

When she gets up I see she has polio-stricken leg. □

Street musicians in New Orleans



(Alisa Anurbach)

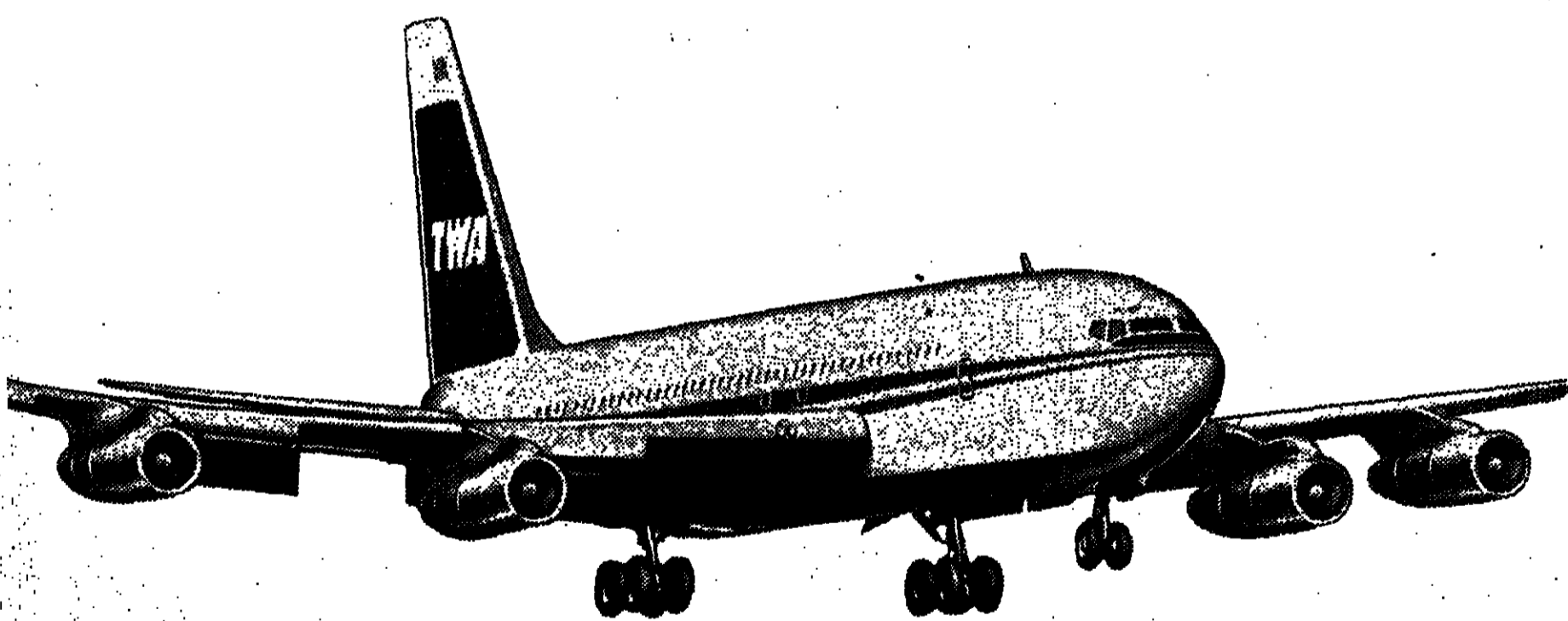
Hotel interior, Atlanta



(Alisa Anurbach)

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from Lapland to the Algarve.



## British Isles

LONDON, with 12 million visitors a year, is aptly described as the tourist capital of the world.

It is certainly a favourite destination for people from this part of the world, with as many Israelis visiting Britain as Britons visiting Israel.

At Marks and Spencer's department store in London, Hebrew is more commonly heard than English and Arabic is more commonly heard than Hebrew.

Accommodation for Israelis visiting London as part of a package tour will not, of course, present problems; such arrangements will have been made in advance. But for Israelis visiting on their own, the price of accommodation may come as something of a shock.

First-class hotel prices are as much as twice those of first-class hotels in Israel, but there are alternatives. A reasonably priced room, with breakfast, costs about £14 (IL580) a night for one person; comfortable rooms in smaller establishments will cost about £10 (IL400) double bed and breakfast.

As with other major tourist centres, the further afield one ventures, the lower the cost.

The most popular tourist area in England outside London is the

West Country — about 25 per cent of visitors to England take coach trips to the area. Also popular are the quaint villages and coastal towns in the southern parts of the country, Devon and Cornwall. A seven-day tour of Devon and Cornwall costs about £86.

Visitors to Britain are also discovering the delights of Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

SCOTLAND has many attractions — moors and lochs, pipers and fine whisky. Some take the high road, others the low road, but one way or another about 5 million tourists find their way to Edinburgh each year.

Edinburgh boasts the Holyrood Castle and a spectacular military tattoo, which is performed in August and September as part of the Edinburgh Festival. Edinburgh also has a special charm and shops that rival anything in London.

WALES, too, has a unique boast: The Welsh claim that they give visitors a bigger welcome than any other small country.

The Welsh are hospitable and friendly and the countryside presents contrasts of gentleness and soaring mountain peaks.

The northern seaside resort town of Llandudno is an excellent centre for taking off on coach tours. The town has many fine hotels and pensions.

Across the sea is IRELAND, a

## Far-out Hebrides

MULL, the largest of the 500 Hebridean islands, is often shrouded in mists but is also capable of producing days of Mediterranean-type sunshine. Then, even at the height of season, it is possible for a visitor to find a whole beach to himself and bathe alongside long-haired Highland cattle cooling themselves in the sea.

While it does have an amazing array of beaches, Mull is not really the place for a bathing holiday. It is for fishing, pony-trekking, climbing, skin-diving, walking or just relaxing amid some of Europe's grandest scenery. The Gulf Stream produces a mild, sometimes hot, climate.

There are fewer than 2,000 Mullers, as they call themselves, and they include a number of middle-aged drop-outs from ordinary life. The grocer at Dervaig was once a Fleet Street journalist, and the publican was once managing director of a Yorkshire engineering company. Both feel they have opted out of a rat race.

After the remotest parts of Mull, the 'capital' Tobermory can feel like a metropolis, with its row of shops, bank and fish farm. Yet, with 700 inhabitants, it is really only a large fishing village.

Mull is not cheap, if only because such things as groceries have had to be brought from the mainland. There are only about four petrol pumps on the entire 367 square miles of the island.

Because of the twisting, one-way highland roads, distances can seem vast. A trip of, say, 20 miles to visit the sacred island of Iona can take a morning's motoring.

You do not meet many other cars, but when you do usually one or other has to give way. The effect, as elsewhere on single-track Highland roads, is to make one an advance, unselfish driver. The occasional idiot who does try to compete makes himself look merely idiotic.

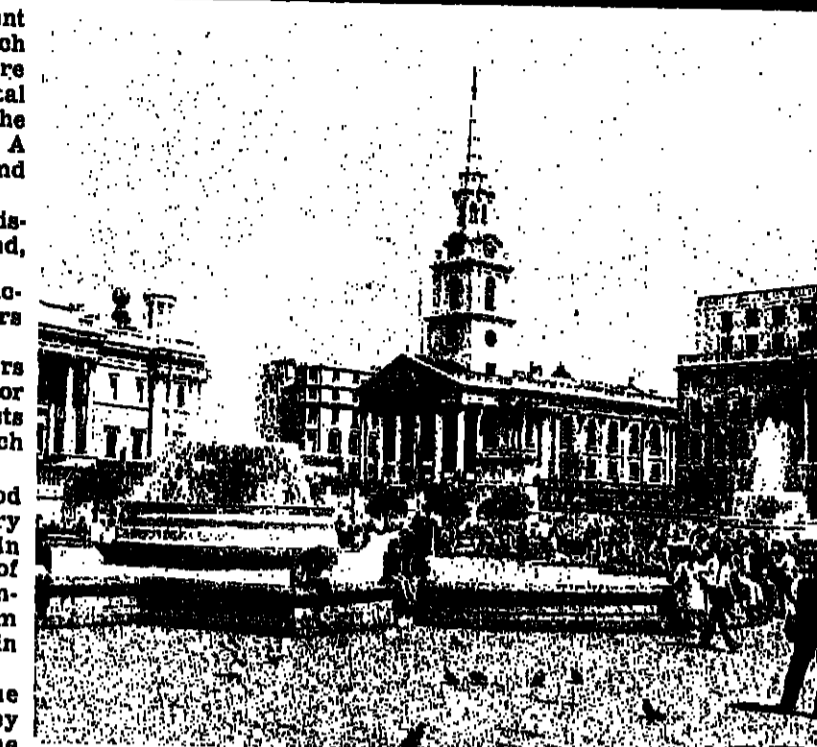
MULL has visitors from France, Germany and elsewhere, so unless intending to camp or use a caravan, it is well to book far in advance, whether for a hotel room or a rented house.

Hotel charges are reasonable for what is provided. A family house, in season, costs around £60 a week. Radio and television reception are rotten, but the Dervaig grocer offers a weekly film show and there is also what the 'Guinness Book of Records' recognises as the world's smallest professional theatre.

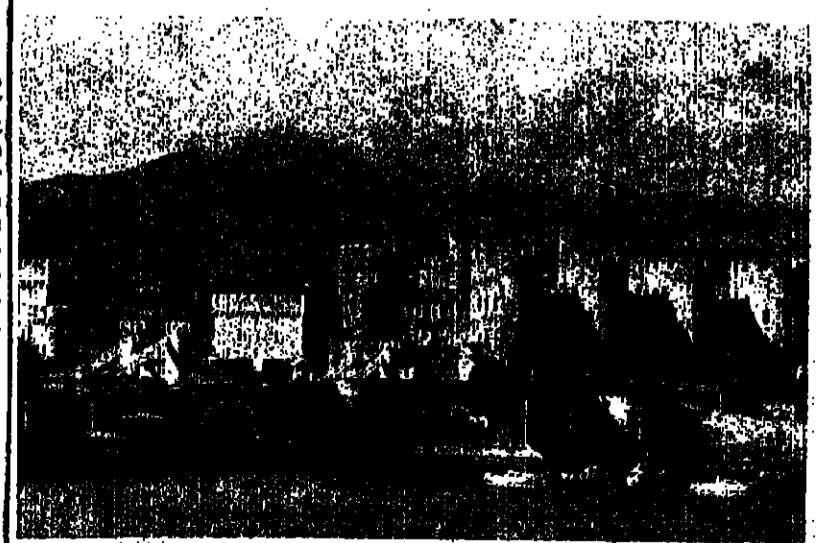
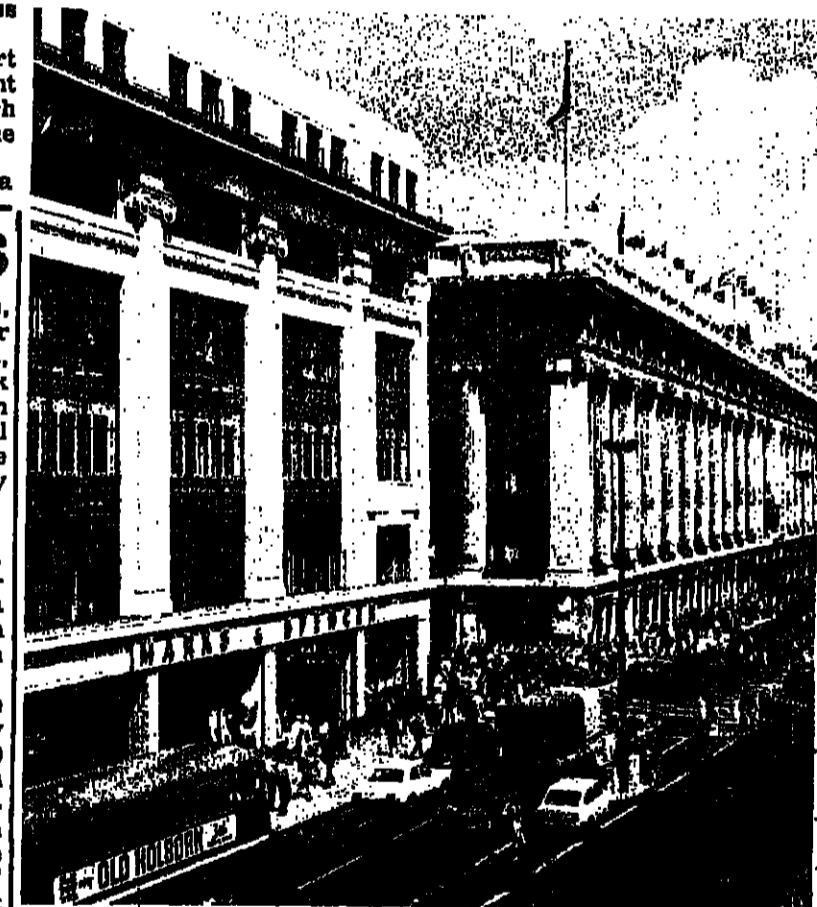
Getting there: There is a tiny airport with flights from Glasgow, but the main way in is by ferry from Oban. The trip takes about an hour and the single fare for two adults, two children and a dog works out at about £12. The cheapest way in is what the locals call 'the wee ferry,' which runs to Mull from Lochaline. It is a 10-minute shuttle service, accommodating cars, but involves about 40 miles' extra driving if one is approaching Mull from anywhere but the north of Scotland.

Further information about Mull can be obtained from the Scottish Tourist Board, 28 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh EH4 5EU.

Golan Cross (Qme)



London's Trafalgar Square (top) and Marks and Spencer's (below); Conwy Castle, North Wales (bottom). (British Tourist Authority)



country of quaint villages, friendly inhabitants and whisky which, some say, is even better than that produced in Scotland.

Covering an area of more than 85,000 square kilometres, Ireland has 3,200 kilometres of coastline and a population (including Northern Ireland) of more than five million people.

"There is probably no more magical tour for a travelling Israeli than the West of Ireland," writes Israeli scholar Geoffrey Wigoder. "I come from Jerusalem — an open sesame to a wonderland of reactions: 'Tis from the Holy Land ye are,' and 'you're a Hebrew,' or the starker 'Are you a Jew-man?' And although the Irish seldom bother to listen, they will take time out to hear about Jerusalem — briefly, before they tell you what they have to say."

Getting there: British Airways and El Al fly direct to London from Tel Aviv. Group fares from IL8,664 return. □

## Scandinavia

NORWAY has its mountains and fjords. Denmark has a fairytale countryside. SWEDEN has all that and more...but you have to look for it.

There are 96,000 lakes, 150 islands and 228,000 square kilometres of forest in Sweden. Some of Sweden's purest forms of nature are to be found in 16 national parks, seven of them in north Lapland.

In every part of Sweden there are cottages and chalets, log cabins and old farmhouses-cum-inns that cater for the tourist who prefers "family" life to the sterility of most hotels.

There are more than 20,000 of these relatively inexpensive establishments throughout the country — from the basic single room (without running water or electricity) to comfortable quarters that have all modern conveniences.

Stockholm is a beautiful city, interesting, exciting and clean. So clean, in fact, that you can go fishing off one of the city's many bridges and eat your catch — if you can find somewhere convenient to prepare it.

There are, of course, many museums that will interest tourists in Stockholm, but there is great satisfaction to be had in simply wandering around the city, admiring the fine architecture.

Stockholm, like other parts of Scandinavia, has an invigorating climate which engenders strong appetites. And there are hundreds of restaurants to satisfy every gastronomic need.

Gothenburg, Sweden's second-largest city and its biggest seaport, is a lively tourist centre. It provides good entertainment, fine food and the Liseberg, Scandinavia's largest amusement park.

DENMARK is made up of some 500 islands, about 100 of which are inhabited.

Funen, the birthplace of Hans Christian Andersen, attracts

(Continued on page 10)

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(Continued from page 9)  
thousands of visitors. There are many other little towns within the Funen archipelago with fortress-type castles and small, way-side inns.

Bornholm, close to the Baltic, is also worth a visit. It has rocky seascapes, a rugged coastline — and excellent smoked herring.

The best way to see Denmark is by the well-organized tours, many of which start from the favourite rendezvous in Copenhagen, the Tivoli Gardens.

NORWAY and FINLAND provide similar fare to Sweden and Denmark, but on a smaller scale. Oslo, the capital of Norway, is a popular destination for tourists, as is Turku, the former Finnish capital. In the Turku area, there are many beautiful islands, sandy beaches and picturesque sailing towns.

The rate for a double room with a private bath in a typical tourist hotel in northern Europe is about \$40.

Getting there: Direct flights to Copenhagen only by SAS and El Al. Group fare from IL\$44 return. □

### Belgium



The "Manneken-Pis" statue in Brussels, perhaps Europe's biggest tourist joke.

BELGIUM, a comparatively small country is nevertheless a most important one. It is not particularly geared to tourism, but it is one of the major crossroads of Europe.

Belgium, in fact, does have a good deal to offer the tourist. The restaurants are a gourmet's delight, and apart from the many museums, art galleries and excellent shopping centres, there are also many antique shops in Brussels and an interesting artists' quarter.

Within easy reach of Brussels are the Ardennes, Antwerp and the picturesque town of Bruges, while ancient Ghent is quite an attraction, especially for those who know its history.

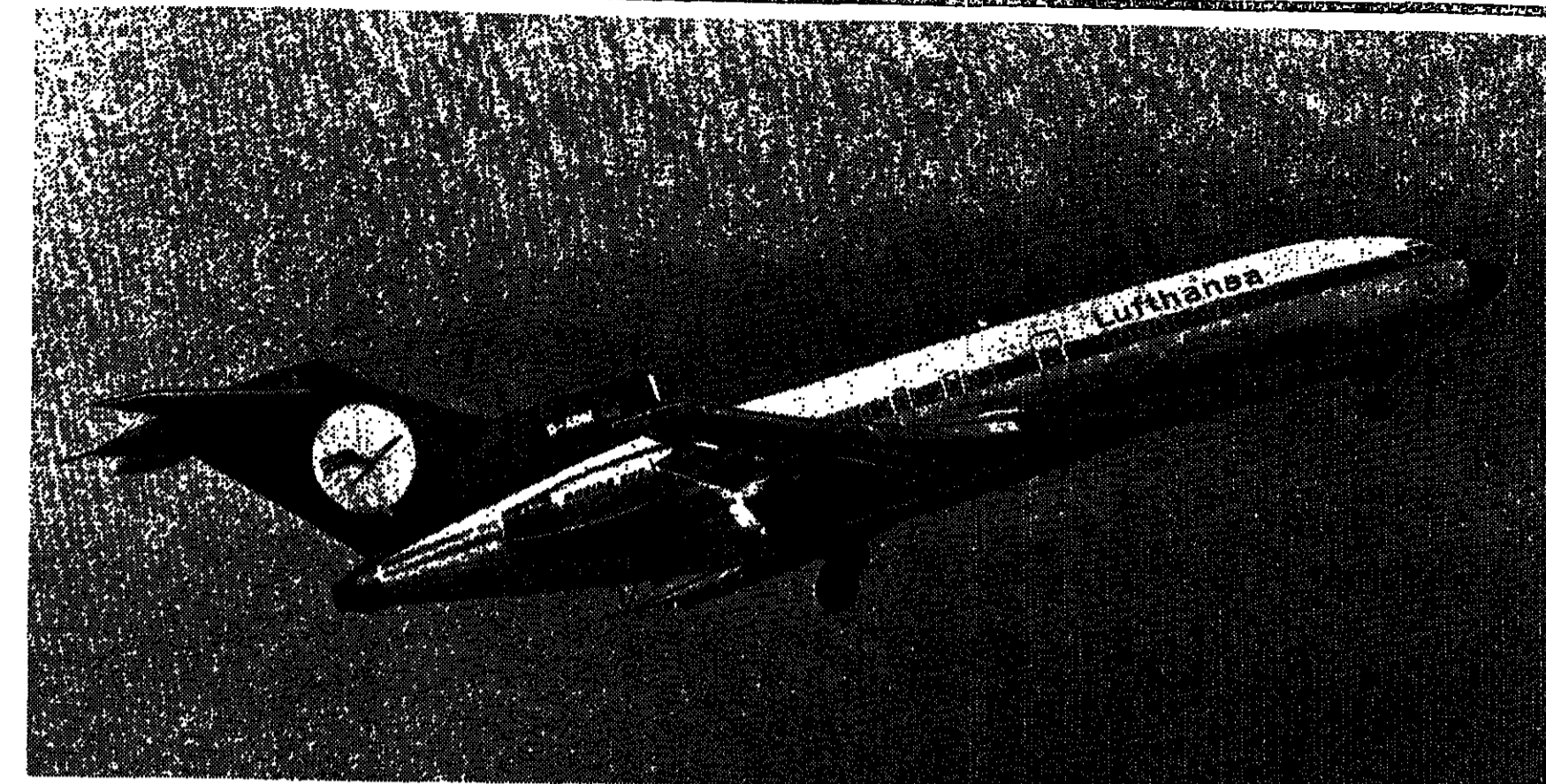
Antwerp is known as a city of much character; it is also the home of the arts, diamonds and ships. Budget about \$40 a night for a double room with bath.

Getting there: Sabena and El Al fly to Brussels. Group fares from IL\$222 return.

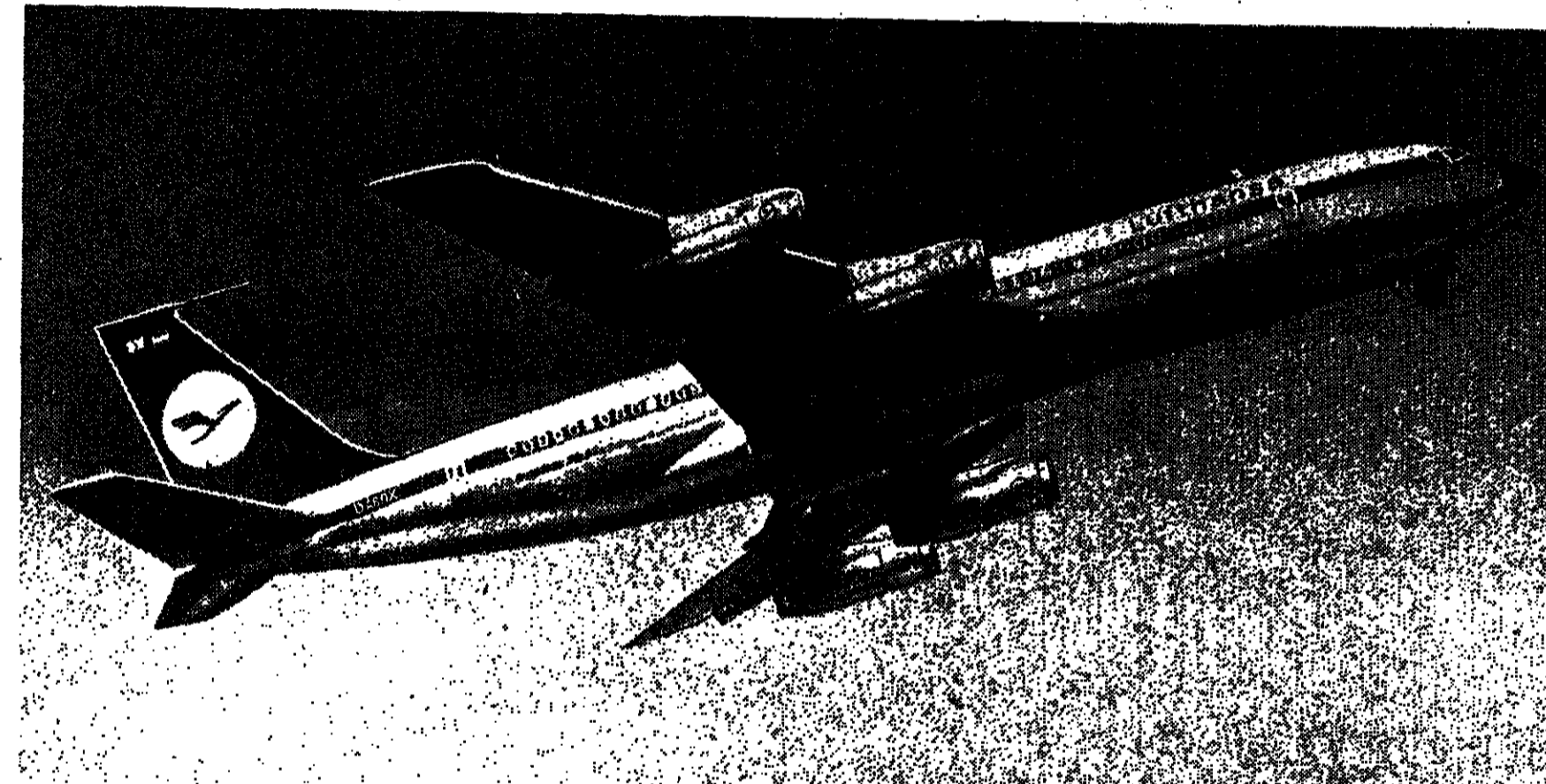
### Holland

HOLLAND is really quite special. While in the past the country concerned itself mainly with growing

(Continued on page 11)



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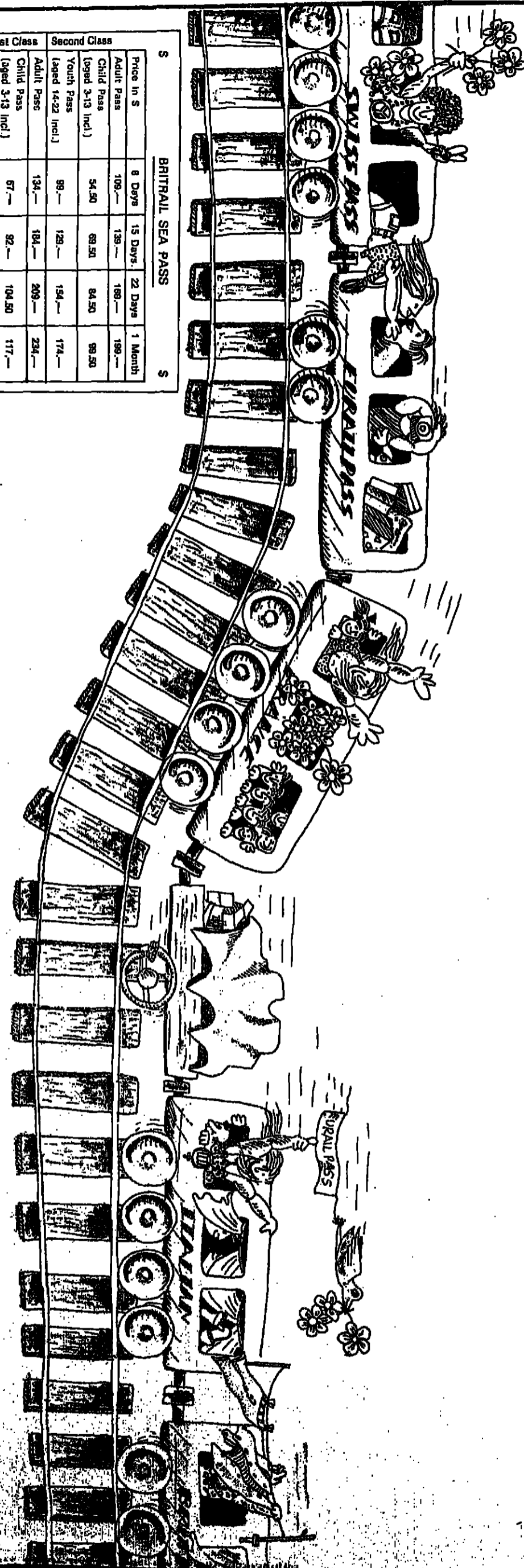
arrive in time for your European or even your South American connecting flight, or for a pleasant evening in Frankfurt.

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\$ 89.50	\$ 64.-
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\$ 117.50	\$ 84.-
\$ 131.50	\$ 94.-
\$ 145.50	\$ 104.-
\$ 159.50	\$ 114.-
\$ 173.50	\$ 124.-
\$ 187.50	\$ 134.-
\$ 201.50	\$ 144.-

## European package

(Continued from page 10)

The amount of food and beer consumed at the festival, which takes place in September and October, includes half a million chickens and thousands of gallons of beer.

Some 60 km from Munich are two outstanding lakes which are the pride of Bavaria: the Tegernsee, favoured by rich and poor; the Schliersee, so tranquil that visitors feel entirely cut off from the outside world.

Tegernsee has a fine health centre with a rare combination of sulphur and iodine substance that provides a cure for many of the usual ailments connected with rheumatism.

Central Germany consists of four regions and has a total population of nearly 80 million - the north Rhine-Westphalia, Hesse, the Rhineland Palatinate and the Saar.

The whole region is traversed by ranges of heavily wooded, medium-altitude mountains, contrasting sharply with the plains further to the north and the mountain ranges in the south.

The Hague, near Amsterdam, winds its way towards the Moselle with the famous Saar "loop" near Mettlach, a place of unforgettable beauty. From Saarbrücken, it is only 10 minutes by car to France and some five hours' drive to Paris.

The Rhineland Palatinate, oldest centre of culture in Germany, boasts beautiful "golden" cities, such as Worms, Speyer, Waakenheim and Edenkoben.

The abundance of fruit that grows on the sunlit hillsides of the Palatinate forest - peaches, apricots, almonds and figs - has earned the area the name "paradise."

In the Rhineland, Germany is seen at its best. Roman fortresses, castles and many other fine buildings are features of the area well known for excellent wines.

Koblenz, Bonn, Cologne and Düsseldorf all offer attractions; Bonn is notorious for its spics.

In Westphalia, the Sauerland and Siegerland form part of the medium-altitude mountain range. Nearby forests, reservoir lakes sheltered by the Teutoburg Forest and the fertile Münsterland make up the "foodstore" of the Ruhr industrial area.

Hesse and the wooded hills that surround Frankfurt are internationally known, as is the Taunus region, the Vogelsberg and the Rhön. Three rivers, the Werran Fulda and Lahn have created valleys of unusual beauty and contain notable spas dating to Roman times.

The ancient trade route from Heidelberg to Darmstadt, along the western edge of the Odenwald, has an almost Mediterranean atmosphere.

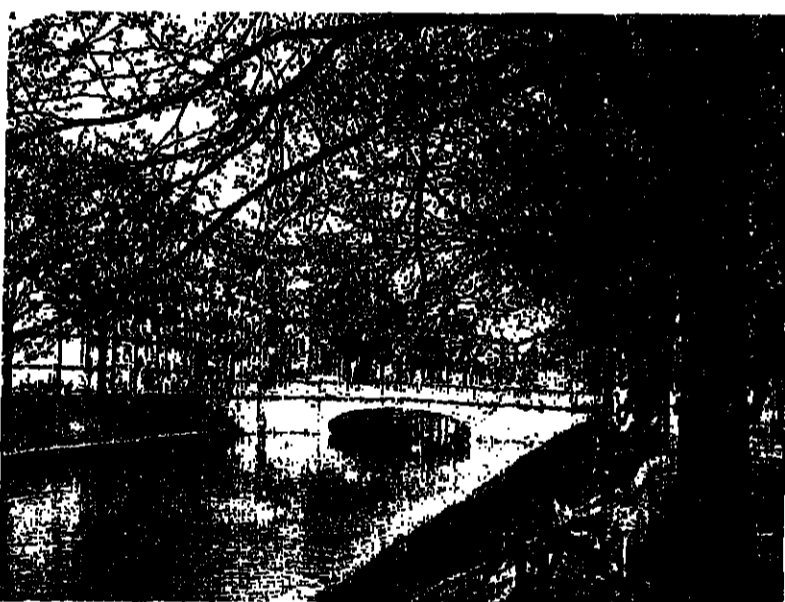
Aachen, near the Belgian and Dutch borders, is about 2,000 years old, and its baths date from that period. The city now has excellent casinos, museums and art galleries.

Kassel, Cologne, Fulda, Koblenz, Mainz and Marburg are just a few of the other delightful attractions of Germany.

Frankfurt, located at the geographical centre of Europe, is one of the world's busiest traffic centres.



Diamond "club" in Antwerp (top); Dutch "Klompendancers" on Windmill Island (below).



Düsseldorf (above); remote Austrian mountain village of Hallstatt (below).



Düsseldorf (above); remote Austrian mountain village of Hallstatt (below).

a huge municipal forest and a zoo of international reputation, as well as first-class restaurants and places of entertainment.

Getting there: El Al and Lufthansa fly direct to Frankfurt from Ben-Gurion Airport. The group fare is from IL\$222 return.

## Austria

AUSTRIA is the ideal vacation destination. It offers a little of everything - and serves it up well.

With an area of over 32,000 square miles and a population of close to eight million, this landlocked country, in southern-central Europe, is at the heart of the continent.

When most holidaymakers think of Austria, they doubtless confine their thoughts to the major resort areas such as the Tirol, Salzburg and, of course, Vienna.

But there is a long list of fine pleasure centres, and the most interesting way of getting around is by self-drive car.

Upper Austria is primarily a summer holiday destination. It is also one of the few places in Europe that offers skiing in mid-summer. Farmhouse holidays are popular, as are the prices charged at most major winter-sport resorts, where accommodation is as cheap as \$12 a day a person.

In the Salzkammergut area is St. Wolfgang, with its delightful lake and historic White Horse Inn, which was used as the background for the film "Sound of Music."

Bad Ischl, another delightful part of Austria, is the home of one of the best-known coffee houses in Europe, Demel's.

Lower Austria offers much that expresses Austria's rich culture. Within its borders lies the Danube Valley, called the Wachau, rich in ruins and romantic, ancient castles.

Lower Austria is essentially a summer destination and offers all the amenities necessary for a bracing, outdoor vacation.

The beautiful, quaint town of Baden has been known for hundreds of years as a spa resort and, more recently, also for its excellent casino.

Numerous pensions and small family-run hotels are a feature of Baden, as are the splendid family-run restaurants. All compete to provide the best service and, of course, everything is spotlessly clean.

Baden is now even more popular since hotels in Vienna are nearly always full and rather expensive. Out-of-season Baden provides excellent accommodation. With the first-class coach service to the Vienna Opera House taking only 20 minutes, it is an ideal centre. Tours are operated to all parts of Austria from Baden.

Every house and business is repainted at least once a year and the residents are diligent about keeping their town and countryside spotlessly clean.

Burgenland, only an hour from Vienna by road, boasts the largest bird sanctuary in Central Europe, with the famous home for storks that every year return to their chimney-top "summer residence" and uncannily go back to exactly the same one.

The culture of Burgenland is part Croatian and part Hungarian. And it is really a world of pleasant music and delightful inns. The main town is Eisenstadt, well known for its candle-lit concerts.

One of the most popular tourist

(Continued on page 14)

# European package

(Continued from page 13)

attractions is the famous castle of Forchtenstein.

Styria, of which Graz is the main city, is also a beautiful area, boasting one of the most extraordinary historic collections in the world. The Army Museum, for example, has on display enough armoured suits to equip 30,000 soldiers.

Excellent wines, first-class roads, and a modern airport make the area around Graz a most accessible vacation region.

In fact, virtually every corner of Austria provides some fresh delight. The variety of landscapes and climates is a large one.

High Alpine scenery gives way to rolling hills, heavily wooded forests and broad green plains.

The highest peak is the Grossglockner, with its many winding curves rising to over 3,800 metres, with a glacier that attracts many tourists to the region. The mighty Danube flows some 200 miles of its length through Austria, and a tour on the riverboats through the countryside is a must for every visitor.

Salzburg has been described as one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Lying among the snow-capped peaks of the Alps, Salzburg is as rich in culture as it is in beauty. At festival time, the streets of Salzburg become the stage for music, drama and folk-dancing.

Apart from its many cultural shrines, Salzburg has every amenity a visitor could ask for. Hotels of every style and type abound, and for the winter visitor Salzburg offers 30 winter resorts and 43 winter recreation places.

The exciting lake district that unfolds through Salzburg to Upper Austria and Styria offers many hundreds of small and large holiday resorts, each of which has a

unique atmosphere and character.

The many lakes offer opportunities for swimming and water sport and, of course, sunbathing in ideal surroundings.

Vorarlberg is Austria's western province and offers magnificent views of Lake Constance with its steamers and sailing boats passing through the Bregenz Woods to the Alpine mountains of Widderstein. Bregenz, the main city of Vorarlberg, dates back from Roman times; during the Middle Ages it was ruled by the counts of Bregenz and Montfort.

In the heart of the magnificent Alpine region is Innsbruck, capital of the Tirol and one of the world's major winter sports centres.

Surrounding the town are the huge snow-covered mountains which dwarf the city. Without any guide, the visitor to this delightful area can take any of a dozen different bus trolley routes and within minutes be at the foot of a mountain.

Kitzbühel, one of the Tirol's main holiday centres, is another winter sports resort which, in summer, is ideal for low-cost holidays.

This delightful little countryside town is already very popular with Israelis who wish to get away with their families. Many of the charming cottages have rooms for rent, some provide breakfast, others offer cooking facilities and, even in these days of inflation, a room can be obtained for as little as \$14 a day, or less.

Good service and good food is a tradition in Austria. From lavish banquets in historic palaces to the simple, satisfying food of the wayside inn, Austria is unequalled in fine hospitality and service.

Getting there: El Al and Austrian Airlines share the direct route between Tel Aviv and Wien-



Memorial to Archduke Johann Denkmal in Graz's main square

na with regular daily flights. The group fare is IL8,188 return.

## Switzerland

SWITZERLAND is synonymous with winter sports, money and watches.

It has been said that Switzerland was one of the first tourist destinations in Europe with scholars, soldiers and merchants passing through their way to bigger countries. Their inns that abound were the forerunners of the modern sophisticated hotels (from 10 double a night) which have made Switzerland the home of the hotel training trade.

Out of the city of Zurich, the attractive centres are Lucerne, Lausanne, Montreux and, of course, Geneva.

The best way to see Switzerland is by the vast motorcoach network and steamers that ply the numerous lakes.

The Swiss Holiday Card is the tourist pass to unlimited nationwide travel on the extensive rail, road and steamer network.

Apart from German-Swiss French and English are widely spoken, and the enterprising Swiss publish tourist leaflets in every major European language and even in Hebrew.

Off the beaten track is Grindelwald, a beautiful little mountain village — and the most popular destination for visiting Israelis. Everything has been done by the local authorities as well as the Jewish community to make the Israeli vacationer feel at home.

Hotels and pensions abound, do chalets and hostels. Days spent hiking or climbing, and there are excellent glacier excursions. There is a mountain climbing school and, of course, swimming facilities are also available, and there are many good restaurants, bars and

dance halls. Getting there: Swissair and El Al to Zurich, Basle, Geneva. Group fare: IL8,188 return.

## France

PARIS is romantic, chic, magnetic and inspiring. That is a statement five million visitors a year will confirm.

They will also confirm that Paris can be a very expensive city. But there are bargains to be had in every quarter.

Top-class entertainment in Paris is without equal, but one has to pay heavily for it... a full dinner, with champagne, can cost F500 (IL2,500).

Accommodation can also be expensive, but an adequate three-star hotel will charge from F100 (IL200) and a two-star hotel from F50 (IL100) a night.

If one really wants to know Paris — and it is worth knowing well — then one must walk.

The Michelin Guide, published in English, German and Italian, provides many other hints for the budget traveller in the French

capital.

THERE IS, of course, more to France than Paris. There is Provence with its romantic past, the wild beauty of Auvergne, the forests of Vosges, the glaciers of the Alps, mysterious Brittany and the sun and fun of the Riviera.

The Loire Valley has, in the past 10 years, become a popular area for tourists with cars. There are more than 120 chateaux in the "Garden of France," through which the Loire River flows.

In addition to the breathtaking chateaux, there is a plethora of sumptuous Renaissance residences and classical palaces of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The central town of the region is Tours, which owes its importance to Louis XI and the silk industry. From Tours, it is a pleasant drive to the highlights of the valley — chateaux at Blois, Chaumont, Chenonceaux and Chinon.

For those who do not have cars, there are 15 trains each day from Paris to the Loire.

And for the traveller on a tight budget, the Loire Valley offers some of the most beautiful camping sites in the world.

Travelling south, one passes through the rugged, mountainous Dordogne region, which is also abounds with castles and ancient, walled towns. Most spectacular among them is Beynac, with its chateau dating from the 13th century, perched on a high cliff.

Turn west and you travel through the celebrated French wine-growing regions to Bordeaux, beautiful beaches and, at the nearby resort town of Arcachon, the remarkable sight of mountain-sized sand dunes.

The Gironde estuary joins the Garonne and Dordogne rivers, and a fine stretch of sandy beach extends for over 150 miles along the Cote d'Argent. Bordered by dunes and magnificent forests, the coast has a calm and invigorating climate.

The Basque coast in the south, between the Adour and the Spanish border, is of a very different character. Here, the Pyrenees plunge into the ocean, forming sheer cliffs and coves.

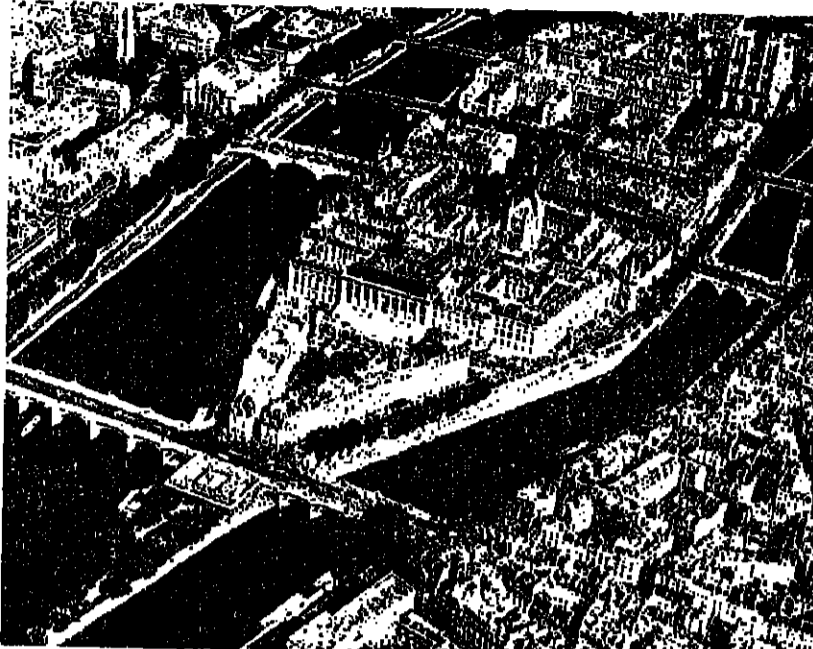
The Basque coast and the Cote d'Argent are for holidaymakers who seek water sports.

Visitors to the region will also have an opportunity of discover-

ing Basque country (see p. 18), Al to Marseilles; Air France to Nice and Lyons. Group fare from IL7,887 return.

Getting to France: Air France, TWA and El Al direct to Paris; El

(Continued on page 16)



The oldest part of Paris, the Ile de la Cité houses Notre Dame cathedral and the Hotel Dieu.

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הכרזה מן האולם



## European package

### Self-catering in the Lot

OUR FIRST experience of taking a house ('self-catering' had yet to be invented) in rural rather than seaside France was in 1962. We were living in Paris and had four French-speaking children we had always assumed required sand and sea in the summer. A holiday inland would be an experiment, threatened by the probability of an infant rebellion.

We drove down to the Lot department at Easter and picked up a list of houses to let from the Syndicat d'Initiatives at Gourdon. One of them commanded a marvellous view over a gentle valley. The owner, summoned by an improvised, Anglo-French yodel, walked slowly uphill towards us from a field of maize, beaming under a broad straw hat and showed us the dank, cobwebbed interior of the house with pride. When we asked to see the lavatory, she swept a plump arm in a generous gesture that took in the whole valley. 'Dehors,' she said.

The same day we found a beautiful house with a pigeon tower, in a tiny village called Poudens. It had just been restored in the traditional style, tactfully modernised (bathroom and indoor loo) and elegantly furnished (grand piano included) and it was cheap.

But at that time, the Dordogne and the Lot were backwaters to be sped through on the route to Spain. Since then, the Dordogne



A resident of the 8th arrondissement

and (to a smaller extent) the Lot have been invaded by Dutch and British buyers and gentrifiers of lovely stone ruins. The French "Gites Ruraux" organisation has accelerated the modernisation. Now, you are unlikely to be offered loo-in-the-landscape self-catering and the house at Poudens is certainly beyond our means.

Aquitaine has become fashionable. Even the French go there. Among the costs is the little prehistoric cave you used to ask a farmer to show you and which is now on the tourist map with visiting hours, fees and queues. The closure of Lascaux is the

same disaster writ large. Crowds also change the pace of life and bring in brusqueness (even a shortage of fresh bread), where the slowness of everyday dealings used to put a salutary brake on the city-dweller.

That brake and the extraordinary niceness of people in the Dordogne and the Lot is what stiffened any rebellion by our young and has drawn us back year after year.

Our children never missed the seaside, and we were spared the agonising role of amateur lifeguards and the daily boring trek from beach to table, laden with the impedimenta of chairs, spades, buckets, water-wings, towels, sandwiches and all the rest. The children were somehow absorbed and felt free. But villagers are watchful and we could always find them. They were safer than on a beach.

On one holiday in the Lot, neighbours insisted that it was time we had a break ourselves. The children were temporarily adopted and we were sent off on a sort of second honeymoon, which we used for a motoring tour of the Camargue, the Languedoc and the Pyrenees. We telephoned for news every night, but were not missed. When we arrived at the farmhouse, where our two sons were billeted, we were greeted with an offhand 'bon soir.'

Such friendship and kindness are still waiting there in Aquitaine and elsewhere in rural France, if holiday-makers are prepared to take the trouble to learn adequate spoken French, avoid crowded centres, such as Sarlat in the Dordogne, spend, if possible, a month rather than a fortnight in one place, and find time to talk.

William Millinship (Ofs)

## Spain

SPAIN has had its share of inflation, but it still provides a relatively cheap holiday — a well-furnished cottage near Valencia costs only about \$35 a week, and an excellent dinner for two, with a jug of wine, costs less than \$5.



Rural Spain.

Such reasonable prices are common throughout Spain and most cases are matched only by Portugal, Yugoslavia and Rumania.

Madrid, the capital, has the Prado and a score of other museums and art galleries. Madrid abounds in the city and the part of Madrid has many flamenco musicians performing for a glass of sherry.

Madrid has more sunshine than any other city in Europe, with average day temperatures in the summer ranging from 82 to 87°F. Bullfights, a great attraction, mostly take place on Sundays, the season starting in spring and ending in October.

Horse racing, football and golf are also popular sports in Spain, while winter sports are available from December to April just 30 miles from Madrid.

An unfamiliar sport for Israelis is hunting, but it is popular in Spain and there are many areas where hunting enthusiasts can pursue their sport.

Melia Tours, established in 1947, provide the best means of seeing Spain. Melia have a fleet of some 200 tourist coaches and have provided services for over 25 million clients. They have 150 offices spread over five continents.

Melia also own a big chain of hotels in Spain as well as motels and apartotels. They employ over 1,000 persons. Apart from the usual city tours, night tours and visits to bullfights, Melia also offer full or half-day tours to Toledo, and full-day tours to Segovia and La Granja.

Over 30 million people visit Spain each year. Popular with Israelis is the tour to Toledo, a beautiful town with a rich Jewish history and spectacular views of the Castilian countryside.

Jews flourished in Spain and were among that country's most creative citizens before the Inquisition and expulsion.

Most of the Jewish historical sites are south of Madrid, but there are also sites of Jewish interest in Barcelona and El Escorial.

Capital of Spain until 1601, Toledo is said to have been one of the first Jewish settlements in the Iberian peninsula, with Jews arriving there after the destruction of the First Temple.

The Santa Maria la Blanca Synagogue was built at the beginning of the 13th century, and the El Tránsito "shul" was started in the middle of the 14th century.

South of Toledo across the plains of La Mancha, is the delightful tourist attraction of Andalusia. The Costa del Sol, overcrowded in summer, is nonetheless worth visiting for the magic in its ambience which no amount of development can destroy.

Gaspacho, a speciality of the region, is a cold vegetable soup; it is the most popular among Israelis who have access at home to all the ingredients — including the hot weather.

Melia offer tours to Granada, Malaga, Torremolinos and Malaga.

Cordoba, considered one of Spain's most beautiful cities, claims to have the only remaining synagogue in Andalusia, the Ramon Caceres structure dating from the 10th century and located on the Calle de Los Judios. It was in this neighbourhood that Maimonides was born.

There are no synagogues in Seville, but in the Jewish quarter, with its 50 inhabitants, Israelis are particularly welcome.

In Madrid itself, there is Beit Yisroel; the only synagogue in the city which serves over 3,000 Jews. The total Jewish population of Spain today is about 14,000. Most are in Madrid and Barcelona, with a few in Palma, Valencia, Seville, Malaga and Cordoba.

Getting there: There are no direct flights from Tel Aviv to Madrid. Group fares (via Zurich) are not available at time of going to press, but should be in the same range as those to Paris. □

(Continued on page 18)

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BEFORE leaving Madrid for Bilbao, I tried to memorize some Euzkadi (Basque) words, but could not manage even a tiny part of the 18 declensions of the nouns or the 38 conjugations of the verbs.

## BASQUE AND PROUD OF IT

Presenting my letter of introduction to a young lady in Bilbao, I greeted her with "Egun on" and jokingly added, "Nai ta sana" (I love you).

She laughed and said — in Spanish, of course — "Don't try out your knowledge of our language in this way with our young women."

Both the language and the ancestry of the Basques baffles scientists. "We exist but we do not know who we are," said several Basques I met, perhaps the descendants of one of the earliest Asian roaming peoples who settled in the north-east of Spain and south-west of France.

Earlier generations of Basques beat off onslaughts by the Phoenicians, Celts, Geths and Visigoths, Romans and Arabs, and they made a short overlordship of Charlemagne's rule. By the beginning of the 11th century, their kingdom of Navarre had united all Basque lands — "A stubborn people," the chroniclers wrote of them.

The "Arbol de Guernica" tree is the national symbol of the Basques. Under that tree all assemblies in ancient times were held. The tree also witnessed the drafting of the "Fueros de Guernica" (Charter of Rights), which is at least as old as the English Magna Carta.

Once, the elder of the De Hero family was elected Senator of the Province of Vizcaya but refused to render the oath of loyalty to the people, also rejecting the

"Fueros." The people threw him down from his balcony "so as not to allow him to become a tyrant," the chronicle records.

The Basque national anthem, "Canción al Arbol de Guernica" (A Song to the Tree of Guernica), was composed by José María Yparaguirre, an illiterate shepherd and roaming balladeer.

NEITHER VINEYARDS nor orange groves are found in Spain's north-eastern provinces called Provincias Vascongadas ("Euzkadi" to the Basques).

The land of the Basques has its own "groves," but they are underground. One can sense their peculiar smell in Bilbao, the capital, and in the towns around it. All of them literally "sit" on mines of iron ores, copper and other metals.

Elbar, Baracalde, Sestao, Tolosa, and Beasin can quickly satiate one's nose, throat and lungs — not with the fragrance of oranges, but with smoke belching from the forests of foundry chimneys, smelting ovens, steel works, armament, munition and railway-engine factories.

THE BASQUE "groves" stretch uninterrupted to the French border and to the Catalan provinces. The biggest investments — in fact, the largest amount of capital of the Iberian Peninsula — is located in Bilbao.

The government in Madrid sees enough reasons for not granting the Basques a broad autonomy

and not allowing separation.

BILBAO'S downtown seriousness emanates from the massive buildings of the banks, mining corporations and insurance companies, reminiscent of the City of London between the two world wars.

The tiny River Nervion cuts Bilbao in two. With a few strokes, one can swim from one shore to the other. The Nervion — "Ibaizabal" to the Basques — may be a rivulet, but it has been sufficiently deepened to allow for ocean-going vessels. Its banks consist of 15 km. of thick concrete. Bridges for pedestrians and draw-bridges to allow ships with tall masts to pass span both sides.

The vessels move slowly in the alley of cranes and warehouses up to the "Aynutamiento" — municipality — in the centre of the city. They pass by the railway station, leave behind the ugly, dirty and almost black dwellings of the workers' district and move on along the quay's beautiful promenade and monumental theatre.

Beyond the cranes, on the right shore of the Nervion, rise the city's foundries and steelworks, poisoning the air and dirtying the sky as far as Portugalete, Bilbao's external port and shipyards.

IN THE early days of the Basque land's riches, owners and workers used one headgear — the "bolina," or beret, which brought more fame to the people than did Ignacio de Loyola, the founder of

the Jesuits, or Miguel de Unamuno, the philosopher and Nobel Prize-winner for literature.

But the French and British investment companies early in the 19th century discovered the riches of the Basques' underground "groves," and huge development began.

In 1897 alone, Basque mines produced 6m. tons of iron ore. It was then that about 2,000 Basques exchanged their headgear for high hats, two million of their countrymen continuing to wear berets.

The Basque loves to work. He talks little, is practical and serious. An aggressive entrepreneur, a clever engineer, a hard-working miner and foundryman — these are the true representatives of the Basque people. Mines and heavy industry shaped their mentality in a very different way from the carefree southerners.

Peculiar, too, are their sports, mostly involving the moving of very heavy stones.

The Basques are rather short and heavily built. They are not graceful dancers and cannot be compared to the light Andalusians.

It is hard to imagine a Basque in the arena, muleta and sword in hand and facing a bull. A Basque would soon throw away the matador's equipment and take the bull by the horns.

THE LONG fight for the recognition of their national identity dates from 1873 when they bet on the wrong horse — the French Bourbons instead of the Austrian Hapsburgs. The Bourbons deprived them of the last vestiges of their cultural freedom, and they were even forbidden to use

Euzkadi, either in speech or print.

Still, the Basques stubbornly used "Egun on" instead of Spanish "Buenos dias" and continued dancing their national "pata dantza."

The first modern Basque political party was founded in 1912 in Bilbao and limited its demands to cultural autonomy. The programme was sufficient for the rich, but not the masses. Arana Goiri, later adopted a radical goal, which brought him the masses but lost the capitalists.

Later, the Basques embraced new, more radical party, the *Acción Nacionalista Vasca* of the lower and middle classes.

Still later, the Basques in began thinking of their independent state. But the emergence of Franco meant further repression and now that Franco has gone, the Basques continue their fight for autonomy.

Bilbao seems to be on the brink of a siege. The people are all suspicious of strangers, talked freely only to those they trust. The Basques live on a volcano. In the national elections recently, the Basque autonomists won 10 seats, semi-autonomists got 3, and terrorist ETA got one.

ETA is the extremist party, so far about 30 men have lost their lives in the struggle for autonomy, high-ranking officers and civil servants.

Well over 90 per cent of the Basques understand that as dependent state, even with geological riches and industry will not last long. They want autonomy, but they also want to be federated with Spain for all, the Basques are Spanish. □

## Portugal



PORTUGAL, long a tourist paradise and sanctuary for exiled royalty and other power figures, will become even more popular as a result of its comparatively cheap prices, especially for Israelis. A recent survey conducted by the London "Financial Times" showed that Lisbon is 47 per cent cheaper than Tel Aviv.

Most appealing, perhaps, is Portugal's combination of tourist attractions — sunshine, fine beaches, historic sites, excellent food.

Lisbon is not only the capital, but is also a very popular port of call for cruise ships. Like Jerusalem and Rome, Lisbon is built on seven hills and is one of Europe's most elegant capitals. It has wide, tree-lined streets, imposing buildings, a blend of modern hotels, Moorish castles, Manueline monasteries and cathedrals.

The city's main thoroughfare, Avenida da Liberdade, connects with the ancient Rossio marketplace, where the sidewalk cafes are a magnet for residents and trippers alike.

The old quarter of Alfama, of which Lisbon is not too proud, is an area of narrow streets and broken-down houses but, as with some parts of Jaffa, it has many good and cheap eating places that specialize in local dishes.

The most important city after Lisbon is Oporto, the northern capital and second-largest city of Portugal.

Oporto's main industry is the production of wines, but it is also a major tourist centre, connected to all parts of the country by excellent road and rail links as well as by air services from the Pedras Rubras Airport.

Just 30 minutes' drive from Lisbon is Estoril, with its white sands, luxury hotels and famous casino. The winding road between Lisbon and Estoril passes through quaint old villages and forests.

Not far away is the old fishing village of Cascais and, a little further on, the enchanted Sintra, the summer home of Portuguese royalty before the institution was abolished in that country at the turn of the century.

Although its present frontiers were fixed in the 18th century, Portugal claims to be the oldest state in Europe.

Last year, the popular Algarve south coast was completely booked out; reservations must be made very early for summer vacations despite the fact that there are some 55,000 hotel beds. In addition to the many rooms, apartments and villas that are available for rent.

Service charges are usually included in hotel and restaurant bills (15 per cent), and tipping is optional but welcome.

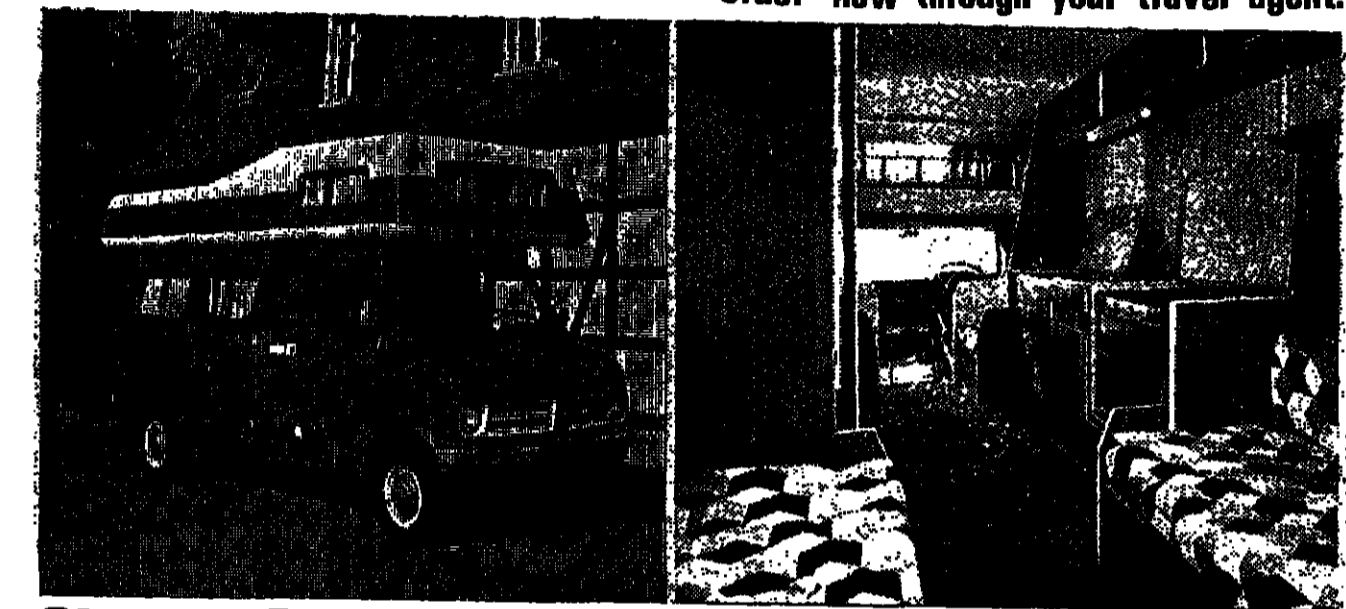
Getting there: El Al flights to Lisbon direct from Tel Aviv. Group rate IL780 return. □

(Continued on page 20)

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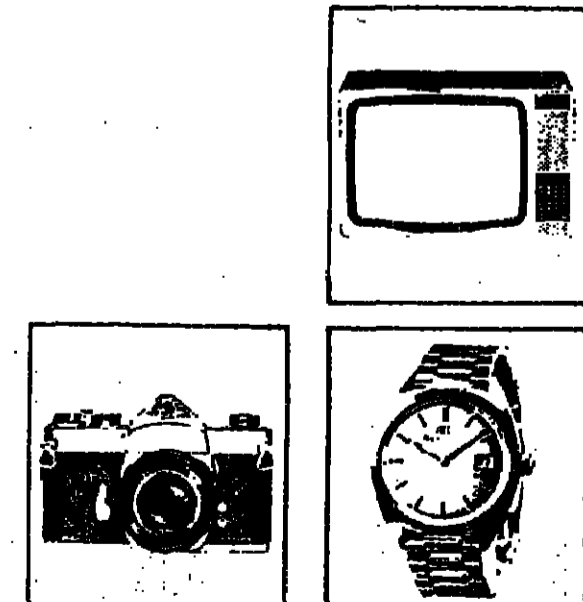
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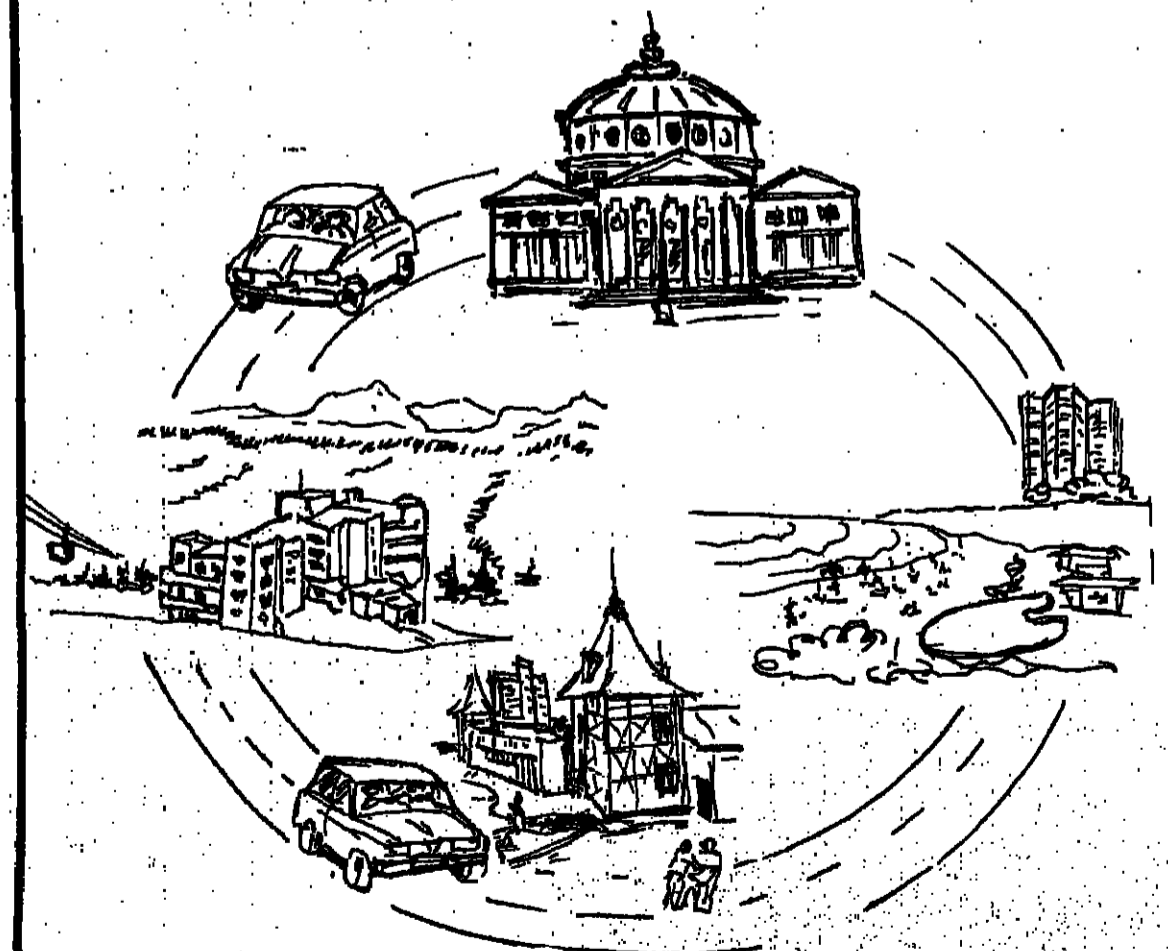
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**Turkey**

IT IS PERHAPS too early to tell if Turkey will turn its back on Kemal Atatürk, the national hero, and follow Iran on the path to Moslem clericalism. The dangers of such a development may no doubt keep many Israelis from planning a holiday in that country this year, despite its obvious advantages as a nearby, inexpensive land with magnificent scenery, monumental historic sites and superb cooking.

On the other hand, those who are in any case going abroad would do well to consider spending at least a few days in Istanbul, still one of the most impressive of Europe's cities. In fact, a visitor could literally remain in Istanbul for months and not see everything of interest; but with even a few days, a little of the flavour can be imbibed.

Although it is possible to find accommodation that is either cheaper or more luxurious, I personally would recommend the 19th century faded splendour of the Pera Palace Hotel, in the heart of Beyoglu, the former "foreign" quarter of the city. In such surroundings, one feels as if one has stepped out of an Agatha Christie novel.

As for sightseeing, there are those who will no doubt discover the covered bazaar and never want to go anywhere else. The richness of merchandise, especially the antiques, both real and apparent, will make the shopping tourist wish that he had brought larger suitcases and more money. The goods may be similar to those found in Israel, but there is so much more to choose from.

For the "serious" tourist, a visit must include the Aya Sofia, the domed church-cum-mosque built by Constantine. I must admit that the building left me disappointed the first time I saw it, on a cloudy, overcast day. The building itself, although an architectural miracle of its time, is not that large by today's standards, and its lines are hidden by buttressing.

But when I revisited it some years later in midsummer, with bright sunlight streaming in, I found it overwhelming. Then I could appreciate the brilliant

mosaics, the delicate stone carving, and the majestic columns of marble and porphyry.

And least one is lulled into believing that monumental art ended with the Byzantines. I would recommend a visit to the nearby Blue Mosque. After a short tour around the outside, remove your shoes and go inside. Sit down on the carpet and let your senses absorb the awesomeness of the building and the richness of the blue tiles lining its walls. Then examine the beautiful detail of the tiles themselves.

A further taste of Ottoman splendour can be had in the Topkapı Museum, former residence of the Sultans. Despite the fame that has come to this site by virtue of the film of the same name, visitors here are usually fooled by the deceptive entrance into thinking it is far smaller than it actually is.

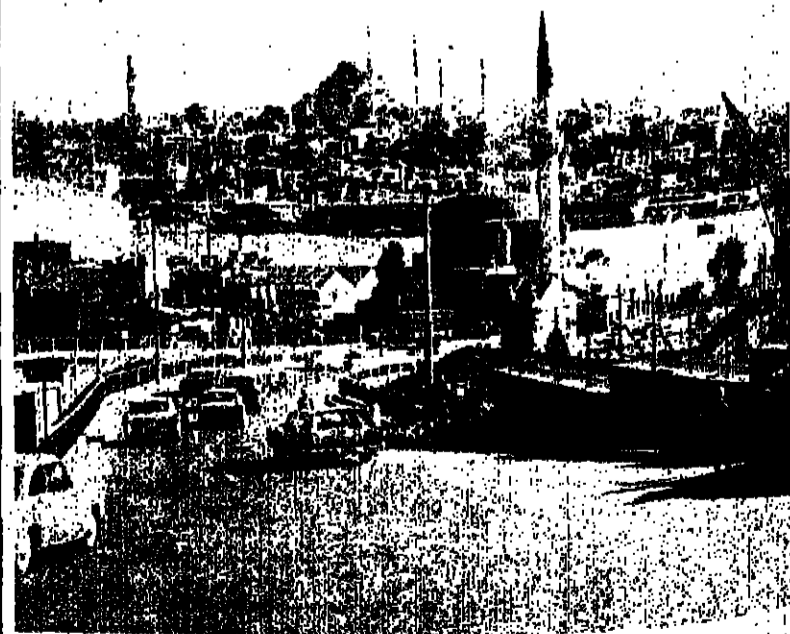
On my first visit to the Topkapı, I found myself gazing at shell after shell of porcelain, only to be too exhausted to enjoy the delightful Central Asian miniatures further on. As for the jewels in the treasury, tourist legend has it that they are all glass, but they're very nice looking just the same.

After a few such excursions, you will no doubt want to reward yourself with something a little lighter, and there is nothing more pleasant than taking one of the regular ferry boats going up and back on the Bosphorus. The air is clear and fresh, the scenery pleasant and the people friendly.

If it happens to be mealtime, stop at one of the little villages along the shore and enjoy the bliss of Turkish cuisine. It is here that you will see what a *meze* can really be. The variety of dishes, both hot and cold, is literally unending, and one can sit for hours, talking, sipping a little *rakı*, the Turkish version of *arak*, and nibbling on little delicacies.

That is not to say that such eating places are not to be found in Istanbul itself. But, in the city, one might do better to try the grilled meat or fish on a spit, or one of the many pudding or pastry shops, where one can sample the original Turkish *borek*.

Nor should you miss trying *ayran*, a yoghurt drink sold in bottles like soft drinks and infinitely refreshing. For that matter, you might also try a cucumber, sold peeled in the street, with a little pinch of salt.



Istanbul's markets.

**Greece**

THERE IS more to Greece than magnificent temples and ancient sculptures. There are also the Greek Islands.

Greece, the most easterly country of Europe, covers (together with the islands) some 132,000 sq.km. Its geography and climate are widely diverse, ranging from barren mountain regions to highly fertile plains and the subtropical coast of Crete.

There are thousands of miles of excellent beaches bounded by quaint villages on the one hand and modern tourist resorts on the other.

And, of course, there is no shortage of archaeological sites, some dating back to 1000 BCE.

When one has seen the sights, excellent Greek food and wines are the next targets.

Eating out in Greece is more than just an experience, it's a form of entertainment, for the Greeks are always ready to make merry over a glass of good wine. In restaurants it is customary to walk into the kitchen and point out what you want — or simply sample the food and then make your choice.

By no stretch of the imagination can Athens be described as a holiday resort. In summer, it can be hotter than Tel Aviv and everyone makes for the cool spots.

Just down the road from the centre of Athens is the port of Piraeus which offers regular ferry services to any of the Greek Islands.

Corfu, the most northerly island of western Greece, is green and not as mountainous as the rest of the country. Rhodes (see p.22) is warm, and it is possible to swim there in winter. Like the other larger islands, Rhodes is rich in historical sites.

Crete is the largest of the Greek islands and it has contrasting scenery — from snow-covered mountains to palm-lined beaches (see p.22).

Crete is reached by air from Athens in less than an hour and the island is linked to Piraeus by daily steamship and car ferries.

The Greek rail service leaves much to be desired, but the road system is good.

Getting to Greece and the Greek Islands: Olympia, El Al and TWA fly to Athens. Group fare from U.S. \$22 return.

Direct flights to Crete and Rhodes starting April. Group fare \$250 return to Rhodes (and about that for Crete).

A cruise from Haifa to the Greek Islands (Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, Chios, Mykonos, but not Crete) and back will be one possibility open to Israelis in 1979. The ship is the old "Nili" renamed the SS Arion. Round trip from \$280 return; to Rhodes from \$188 return (in a cabin); to Cyprus from \$108 return (in a cabin). The price of food is not included in the fare.

There may even still be in the Beyoglu area the small, exquisite Russian restaurant run by three women who fled from their homeland at the time of the Russian Revolution.

And if there are any dangers, they are far less likely to come from religious fanatics than from the drivers, who are worse than those in Tel Aviv.

Getting there: The April group fare was not available at time of going to press, but it should be about the same as that to Athens (U.S. \$62 return). □



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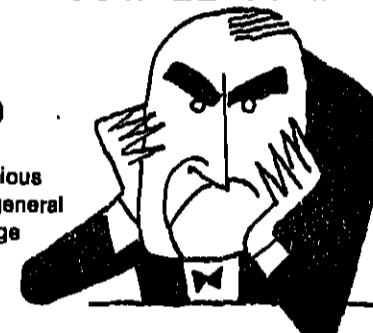
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# MYTHICAL ISLANDS

## Haim Shapiro takes time off in Rhodes and Crete.

LOCAL TOURISM entrepreneurs seem to regard the island of Rhodes as a personal affront. Why, they ask, do so many Israelis insist on going off and exposing themselves to the vagaries of foreigners when they could have a much nicer time at home?

The answer is obvious. A great many people like to go abroad for their holiday. Many Israelis, freed of the tyranny of travel tax, have proved that, given the choice, they prefer a modest, low-cost holiday in a nearby foreign country to one at home.

If one were to ask me why I went to Rhodes last year, the answer would be a bit more complicated. For one thing, I didn't really go there at all, but only used a cheap flight to the island as the first leg on my trip to Crete. But I did stop on Rhodes long enough to see that it had changed since I last saw it, and not necessarily for the better.

I first visited Rhodes in the 1960s, on my last opportunity to leave Israel without paying travel tax. With a sleeping bag in my knapsack, I was looking for a cheap holiday — and I found it.

My hotel, if one can call it that, was in the island's old walled Turkish city. The room — a bare four walls, with unpainted floorboards — contained a bed, a table and a chair. The washing facilities were a large sink in the courtyard, screened from the public eye by brilliant red hibiscus flowers. About the toilet, the less said the better. Showers were available on the public beach.

For this I paid the equivalent of \$0.50 and the food and wine in the tavernas where I had my meals were just as cheap. Every meal was an adventure, with trips into low-ceilinged, steamy kitchens to point to the dishes I wanted.

IN ADDITION to regular visits to a beautiful white sandy beach stretching into crystal-clear still water, I made excursions to the places of interest all over the island. Those not within walking distance of my hotel were reachable by public bus.

Perhaps the most magnificent of these sites is the acropolis at Lindos, less well preserved than the Parthenon, but far more majestic. Standing on a high cliff, it overlooks the sea, and a simple village which, in contrast to modern Athens, only adds to, rather than detracts from, the view.

The village itself is almost too picturesque and it was something of a relief to see the stalls selling Lindos-ware pottery, a type of ceramic almost identical to that made by Armenian potters in Jerusalem's Old City. When I first went there, the residents were renting houses to "artists" who came to spend the summer there. Now they rent rooms to tourists.

On another excursion, a bus took me to the famed "valley of butterflies," in my opinion a rather overrated, if quite pleasant little valley watered by a stream that would be called a river in Israel. The butterflies themselves were a bit of a letdown. Their great number did not make up for rather ordinary markings.

Something that did catch my attention on that bus ride was a reconstructed ancient ruin,



Above: Street of the Knights, Rhodes. Below: Anna Cohen, one of the few remaining Jews in Rhodes, proudly displays her name in front of her copper workshop. (Yossi Hadar)



restored by the Italian Fascists during their rule in Rhodes before World War II. Three columns stood out starkly against the horizon. Unfortunately, the wind had taken its toll and the tops had blown over, leaving only the steel reinforcing rods.

The fact that much of the archaeological and historical reconstruction on Rhodes had been carried out by the Fascists made me view it with a far more jaundiced eye than I might today. Thus, I wandered through the monumental Grand Master's Palace, an exercise in architectural fantasy, with my eyes glued

self-righteously on the floor, inlaid with mosaics from all over the island.

But my prejudices did not prevent me from enjoying the many flowers, trees and bushes, planted by these same Italian rulers. Perhaps the best view of this flora was on the guided tour of the walls of the old city.

In the years that have passed since that first visit, the flowers have continued to bloom, but much else has changed. Last year I found that dozens of hotels, restaurants and shops have sprung up and the beach seems to have gotten smaller and much more crowded. I looked for my old small hotel and in its place found a shop selling fur coats, with all the signs in Swedish.

Mind you, even had the hotel remained, I could hardly have stayed there. In contrast to my first visit when I was single and carefree, last year I was accompanied by a pregnant wife and a one-and-a-half-year-old son. In any case, we had decided to stop only briefly in Rhodes and continue on to Crete, which we hoped would be less "commercial."

THESE HOPES were certainly realized at the airport at Heraklion, the island's main town, where a tourist agent slowly and deliberately found a hotel for us while the airport bus left for town.

We were somewhat daunted when the hotel reception clerk, eyeing our son, suggested that he could sleep in his mother's bed, but he did eventually find us a baby crib. The hotel was centrally located, fairly comfortable and, at today's prices, moderate — about \$15 a night. Incidentally, it was the most we paid for a room in Crete.

Heraklion we found pleasant, if overly urban. For the tourist, the main reason for staying in the town is nearby Knossos, and we dutifully paid our respects to this relic of Minoan civilization, as we did to the archaeological museum. Smaller, less frequented and quite charming, was the folklore museum, with a hodgepodge of relics from the last thousand years or so.

It was here that we made our only Jewish find, a stone portal erected by a wealthy 18th century Sephardi family, with a lion and a name in Hebrew. But museums and archaeological sites could not hold our interest for long, and we yearned for a simple Greek village with its beach, tavernas and fishing port.

WE FOUND almost what we were looking for on the south of the island, in a village called Aghia (pronounced Aya) Galini. To get there we had to pass over winding and sometimes uncertain roads in a rickety bus and the ride was not without incident.

My wife suffers from travel-sickness at the best of times and visibly pregnant, she was even more susceptible. The inevitable happened and she was lucky to make it to the window.

But this bus, old as it was, came with a conductor, and he very generously provided her with plastic bags for further emergencies. He also pointed out she could lie down if she liked on the empty bench at the back of the bus. She

did so only to rush back a few moments later, whispering excitedly that the conductor had tried to kiss her.

The incident cast a new light on Cretan society. What restrictions must exist, we reasoned, to cause a man to make advances to a pregnant woman who has just vomited on a jolting bus while her husband and infant son sit only a few metres away.

As the bus came down the mountain into Aghia Galini, it seemed all we had hoped for. A vast public square faced the water, surrounded by eating and drinking places, with small hotels and boarding-houses clinging to the hillside above.

In fact, the village turned out to have two serious drawbacks: the lack of a sandy beach, and the fact that every hotel in town seemed to have smelly drains. It was then that I understood what our own tourism officials mean when they speak of the importance of infrastructure.

The drawbacks did not stop us from thoroughly enjoying ourselves, going for walks in the surrounding countryside and sitting for hours over a cup of coffee, watching the boats come in. Especially pleasant was a large selection of inexpensive eating-places with good food.

It was here that I found that it is not always enough to make the usual tour of the kitchen. Sometimes the most interesting choices are in a closed pot on the side. I only learned of a local small dish, with a delicious sauce of paprika and onions, because I passed by and saw another diner eating it. As for the stuffed zucchini flowers, I only knew they must be around because I had seen the proprietor's wife preparing them in the morning.

But the food was not enough to keep us and we moved back to the north of the island, to a small town with a minor reputation as a tourist centre. It was there, at Rethymon, that we found our ideal spot.

With relative ease we located a small pension across the street from the wide, clean, sandy beach that led down to a clear, still sea. The same road, a wide boulevard banned to traffic, stretched around in an enormous crescent fringed with cafés and restaurants. Our evening promenade took a full hour, not including the obligatory stop for the local home-made ice cream.

The town itself, a provincial capital under Venetian rule, still bore signs of gracious maritime architecture. The old port, now crowded with fish restaurants, still has impressive steps leading down into the water, just as in Venice.

The number of local craftsmen made shopping a pleasure. Among our "bargains" were beautifully carved wooden forks and spoons, leather goods, and a piece of hand-woven fabric. Laden down with our finds, we left Rethymon only because the time had come for our flight back to Israel.

For those who would like to visit Crete this year, one operator is offering a week-long package visit to Crete tentatively priced from IL\$363, with room and half board. □

# TIMELESS TUSCANY

ERIKA GIDRON

WE STOOD in the dark, oak-beamed hall, sipping the full bodied Chianti served in long-stemmed, ruby-red goblets. Stern-faced Machiavelli ancestors gazed disapprovingly upon the scene, each flanked by his own coat of arms.

Our host, a scion of the Machiavelli and Corsini families, gave a brief outline of the family history and a more detailed, professional rundown of modern wine production. All this in faultless English, with a market flat New England twang, acquired, it appeared, during years of exile in Connecticut.

We were visiting the wine cellars at San Casciano, one-time home of Niccolò Machiavelli. It is one of the many princely *castelli* in the rich wine-growing Chianti region of Tuscany where the public is welcome to taste and purchase the local product.

It is a rare experience today to revisit a region after an absence of some 20 years and not feel flat, disappointed and all too often depressed by the changes that have taken place in the name of progress.

UNLIKE other parts of Italy — Rome, for example, and the industrial north — Florence and the hill regions of Tuscany have changed but little. True, here as elsewhere in the land of the autostrada, there are fast new roads leading even to remote villages (not at all incidentally, Italian drivers are among the best, and certainly the most courteous, in Europe).

The tourist buses parked in the piazzas are bigger and more elegant, with their smoked-glass picture windows. The tourists they disgorge are for the most part German and Scandinavian; who else can afford current in-

clusive tour prices? At night, the darkened Ponte Vecchio is peopled with shaggy-haired hippies, propped against battered guitars, with the all-pervading smell of pot drifting gently over the murky waters of the Arno.

But in the bright light of an Italian day, the Gothic beauty of the green and white marble cathedral, the Giotto bell-tower and the octagonal baptistery fronted by the famed Ghiberti portals (the "doors of paradise," fully restored after extensive damage caused by the floods in the 1900s) remain untarnished in all their splendour. And there is little that can compare, even today, with the pure aesthetic perfection of Michelangelo's David that dominates the Galleria dell' Accademia.

THE FINEST view of Florence is a panoramic one, like the one from the Piazzale Michelangelo, looking down over the flower-filled gardens towards the worn, stone-faced facades of ancient palaces reflected in the waters of the Arno.

In the foreground is the famous passage built by Vasari, which leads from the Uffizi Gallery into the Ponte Vecchio and links both with the Pitti Palace. Downstream are the four bridges, architectural masterpieces characterized by semi-elliptic arches. Standing out above the red rooftops is the cathedral compound — the bell-tower and baptistery and, so close that it seems one could touch it, the crowning majesty of the Duomo, the Brunelleschi dome that caps the marble facade of the cathedral.

No illustrated guidebook can do

justice to the natural beauty of the landscape, the wealth of historic monuments and art treasures for which Florence and Tuscany are famous.

Tuscany was the birthplace of the greatest of Italy's artists, writers and sculptors: Leonardo was born, not surprisingly, in Vinci, near Florence; Boccaccio lived and died in Certaldo; Giotto was born in a hamlet near Florence, and Machiavelli lived and died in Florence.

THE HILL TOWNS of Tuscany blend into and reflect the serenity of the surrounding countryside. Each has retained its own historic and architectural character: Florence is pure Renaissance, Lucca is Romanesque and Siena is distinctly Gothic. The best — the only — way to travel through Tuscany is by private car. There are no organized tours that touch any but the major places of tourist interest, such as Pisa, Siena and San Gimignano.

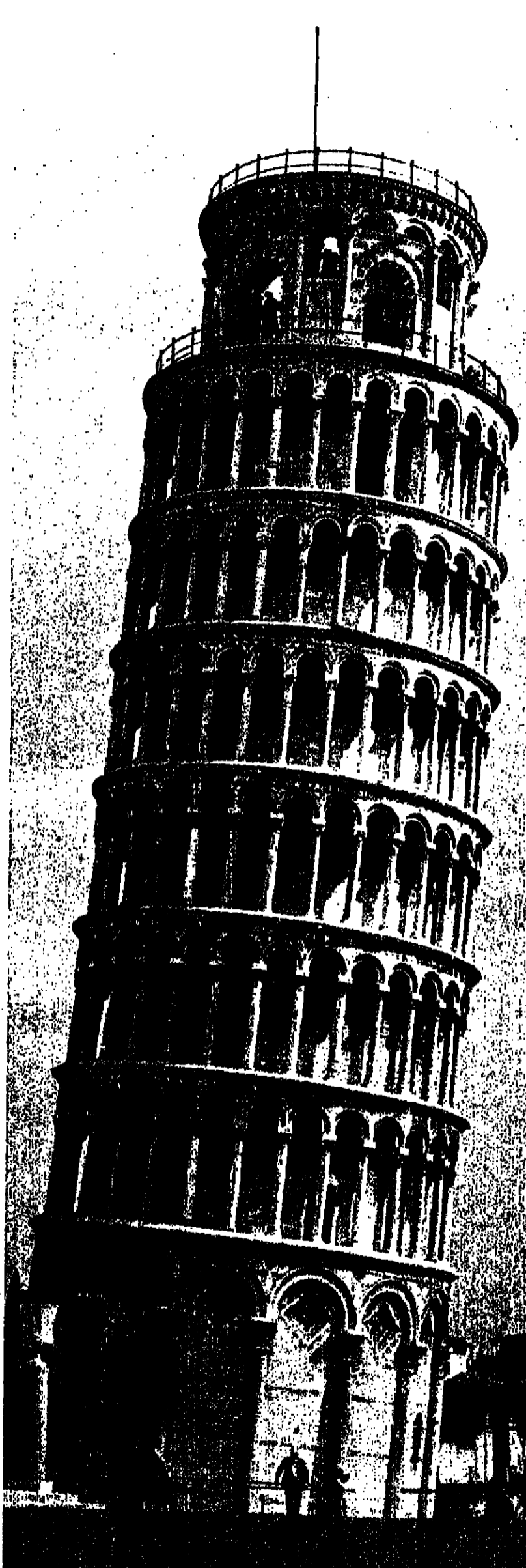
Siena looks like a film-studio mock-up of a mediaeval town. The pink-paved, shell-shaped Piazza del Campo, surmounted by the soaring bell-tower, is the site of the Palio, the annual folk festival complete with horses, chariots, mediaeval costumes and tumultuous crowds who cheer their favourites to the winning-post.

Siena has its own university and music school and, like other Italian university towns, its ration of Israeli students, whom we saw — or rather heard — sitting in the town square, slipping their *capponcini* and discussing the falling rate of the dollar in Italy. They seem not to frequent the beautiful old Sephardi synagogue which is maintained by the few remaining Jewish families in Siena.

To the south-east of Florence, beyond the lush green hills and forests of the Casentino, stands the ancient Etruscan city of Arezzo. One of the first Italian towns to become a city state, Arezzo is strategically sited atop a windblown hillside commanding a breathtaking view over the valley of the Arno and the upper reaches of the Tiber.

Arezzo is still distinctly mediaeval in character. Ancient red-roofed buildings clamber up the steep cobbled streets to cluster closely round the vast Piazza Grande, site of the spectacular annual "Saracens' Joust." On a less historical note, the Arezzo antique fair is held in the same square on the first Sunday of each month. Merchants from all over Tuscany fill the square with items that range from Roman statues to rare stamp collections. Connoisseurs look for *coralli* — ancient red-glass urns and vessels for which the artisans of Arezzo were famous throughout the Roman Empire.

LESS KNOWN — and little frequented by Israelis — is the Versilia, the northeastern corner of Tuscany that includes the long stretch of Tyrrhenian coastline from Viareggio in the north to the seaport and naval base of Livorno in the south. The two tourist sites best known in this region are the ever-popular, and overrated, Pisa, and the marble quarries of Carrara, where you can hack your own hunk of green marble straight out of the craggy hillside. □



Pisa's Tower

Michelangelo's David



הכרזה מן האצל

ALL MY PREVIOUS visits to Rome had been done on the cheap. In those days I was still travelling on the weird escape routes frequented by students. Some of the students turned out to be 80-year-old Calabrian peasant ladies carrying string bags full of onions. The charter aircraft belonged to semi-scheduled airlines. Their point of arrival was Ciampino, Rome's No. 2 airport — an inglorious military establishment ringed with flat-topped DC-4's and Convair 240's too obsolete for anything except fire-drill.

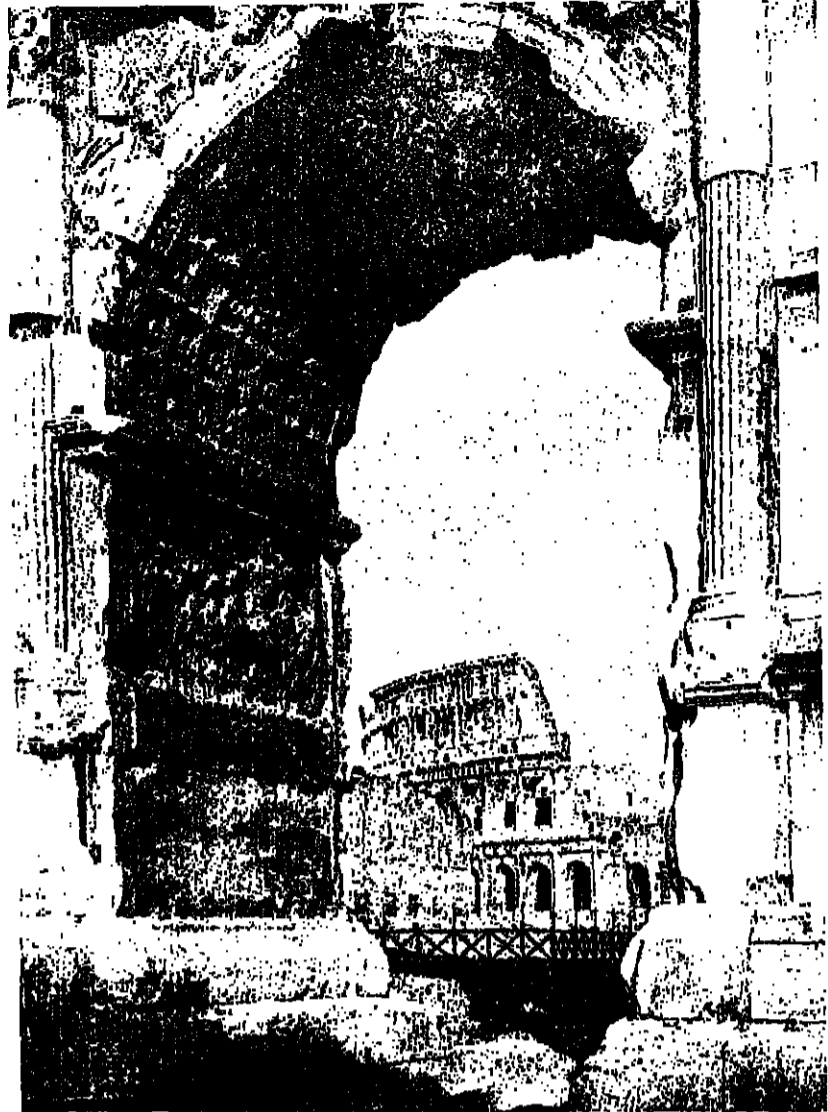
I used to live in the kind of cold-water pensione on the Via del Corso where the original rooms had been partitioned not only vertically but horizontally as well, so that the spiral staircase beside your bed led up to a bare ceiling. You had to apply in writing to take a bath. Lunch was half a plate of pasta on the other side of the Tiber. Dinner was the other half.

But a lot of water has gone over the viaduct since then, and this time I was a *bona fide* traveller. Even at one o'clock in the morning Leonardo da Vinci airport, tastefully done out in fluted chromium, was a treat for the eyes. My hotel was in Piazza Trinità del Monti at the very top of the Spanish Steps. The decor was strictly veneers and cut glass, but it was heavily tricked out with the Medici coat of arms and the bath came ready equipped not just with a plug, but a dinky sachet of foam-producing green goo. My waiting readers were subsidizing this luxury. Could I justify their confidence? What can you say about so old a city in so short a space? I sank cravenly into the foam.

Sleep allayed my fears, but they came back in the morning. I appeared on the Spanish Steps just in time to be greeted by the cold weather, which had been raging down Europe during the night. Rome suddenly froze up solid. The Triton, forever blowing his conch in the Piazza Barberini, abruptly became festooned with icicles. As unashamedly ostentatious as ever, the wealthy Roman women shopping in the Via Condotti instantly adopted a uniform — mink and boots. In a bar a little fat lady who looked like a bale of furs reached up to spoon the cream from a glass of hot chocolate higher than her head. For once nobody was in any danger of being kidnapped. Cold weather meant plenty of snow in the mountain resorts. The terrorists were all away skiing.

WITH ONLY a few days at my disposal I decided to leave most of my usual haunts unvisited, apart from a quick trip to St. Peter's to see how well the Michelangelo Pietà had been repaired. Since I had last seen this masterpiece it had been attacked by a hammer-wielding Australian of Hungarian origins. Perhaps he was trying to effect improvements. Anyway, he had given the Madonna a nose-job. The nose was now back on and the whole statue, I was glad to see, had been separated from its adorning public by a glass wall. Taking it for granted that none of my compatriots had been flicking ink darts at the Sistine Ceiling, I headed out by car to the Catacombs.

Out on the old Appian Way it was as cold as Caligula's heart. Steel drenched the roadside ruins. Like a leftover from *La Strada*, a lone whorl solicited business from passing cars. A couple of millennia ago the cars would have been chariots but she



Top: The Colosseum seen through the Arch of Titus. Above: The Spanish Steps. Below: Holidaying musk tours the ruins of the ancient city.

## THE ROMAN WINTER OF MISTER JAMES

London 'Observer' TV-critic Clive James describes a visit to the Eternal City.

would have looked roughly the same.

Hilarius Fuscus has a tomb out there somewhere. Apart from his name he is of no historical interest, but with a name like Hilarius Fuscus how interesting do you have to be? The Catacombs, however, were mainly for the nameless. In the Catacombs of Domitilla, for example, more than 100,000 people were buried, but only 70 of them came down to modern times with any identity beyond that conferred by the heap of powder their bones turned into when touched by air.

A German monk took me down into the ground. "Zer soil is called tufa. Volcanic. Easy for tunnels. Mind zer head." In this one set of catacombs there are eleven miles of tunnels, one network under another. The two top levels have electric light throughout. "Mine apologies for zer electric light. Mit candles is more eery. Zis way."

People had been filed away down here by the generation. Some of the frescoes remain intelligible. You can see the style changing through time: suddenly a Byzantine Christ tells you that the Empire of the West is in decline. The sign of the fish is everywhere. "You also see zer sign of zer turds dove. Symbol of luff and piss."

When we arrived back at the surface the good friar's next party was alighting from its coach — a couple of hundred Japanese, all of them with cameras around their necks. Some of the cameras had tripods attached. I had been lucky to get what amounted to a private view. Nor were there many tourists at the newest of the Catacombs, the Fosse Ardeatine. The people buried here all died at once, on March 24, 1944. For the whole story you have to go to Anzio, about 35 miles down the coast.

ANZIO is a small town built around a port. A few hundred yards from the port there are some ruined foundations on a low cliff. Standing in the ruins, you can look along the beaches. The Allied forces came ashore here in January 1944. The landing was unopposed but it took a long time to develop the beach-head.

Italy was already out of the war but the Germans were not: far from it. Kesselring counter-attacked with horrific violence. The whole area became an enormous battlefield. The flat littoral terrain was ideal for the German armour. Right over your head, the Ju 88's came bombing and strafing. The Allied forces were stymied for months.

In Rome, the Italian resistance fighters grew tired of waiting. They ambushed an SS detachment in the Via Rasella, just down from the gates of the Palazzo Barberini, killing 32 men. Hitler ordered reprisals at the rate of ten to one. The SS, enthusiastically exceeding requirements, trucked 335 people out to the Fosse Ardeatine and shot them all.

But back to those ruins at An-

zio. I am still standing in them, a bedraggled figure washed by the rain. They are the ruins of Nero's seaside villa. And back in time beyond Nero, on that low hill behind the town, Cicero had the country house of whose amenities he boasted in his letters to Atticus. In those days Anzio was called Antium. Further back than that, Coriolanus went into exile here. And even further back, at about the time the city of Rome was being founded — the year zero *ab urbe condita* — Antium was one of the main hangouts of the dreaded Volsci.

The Volsci feature on almost every page in the early books of Livy. The Romans were still confined to Rome and whenever they ventured outside their seven hills they had the Volsci breathing garlic down their necks. Eventually, through discipline, the Romans prevailed. That was Livy's message to his contemporary readers: remember your origins.

EVERYTHING and everywhere in and around is saturated with time. If you look too long, you will be hypnotized. I went out to Lago Albano in the Alban Hills. The lake is in a giant crater. High on the rim is a town called Marino, where Sophia Loren owns a house. The Pope's summer residence is somewhere up there, too.

But take a close look at the sheltered lake. Imagine it in tumult. In Imperial times it was called Lacus Albanus and most naval battles were held on it. That would have been my job in those days: writing reviews of most naval battles. "Once again Hilarius Fuscus creamed the opposition..."

Until recently Sophia Loren faced serious charges with regard to the national currency. She was accused of trying to export some of her money. Almost everybody who owns any bank account has been doing the same, but Sophia is supposed to be a woman of the people. Even the Press has turned against her. Her latest film has been greeted with maniacal raspberries. I went to see it. The critics were right.

The movie is directed by Lina Wertmüller and is crisply entitled *Fatto di sangue tra due uomini per causa di una vedova: sospettano moventi politici*. This may be loosely rendered as "A matter of honour between two men because of a widow: political motives are suspected." My translation loses something of the original's flaccidity. Ms. Wertmüller has an international reputation but her idea of a joke reveals her to be a humorless fool.

The movie is all about hard times in Sicily. Apart from Sophia, it is a disaster. Sophia, playing a passionate character burner, looks better than ever and acts a storm. It is ridiculous that so life-giving an individual should be made a soap-opera.

THE SAME thought occurred to me when I attended a Royal Opera production of Bellini's



*Capuletti ed i Montecchi*. Romeo and Juliet both sang magnificently. The settings were a reminder of how a lot can be made out of little — Covent Garden please copy. The audience in the stalls consisted mainly of the Roman bourgeoisie. They behaved like pigs. A man near me recited the whole plot to his deaf wife while she ate chocolates which had apparently been wrapped in dead leaves. The stalls were empty before the curtain calls were half over. But the gallery went crazy with gratitude.

Here was an opera company for any city to be proud of. Yet half of its members are in trouble with the police because of alleged corruption. While terrorists main and murder at will, the cops are chasing contrabos. It's a clear case of fiddling while Rome burns.

In the Via Michelangelo Caetani a shrine of wrenitis and photographs marks the spot where ex-Premier Moro's body was dumped, mid-way between the respective headquarters of the Communists and the Christian Democrats. To the terrorists, Moro stood for compromise. It followed logically that his life was forfeit. Most of the terrorists are *figli di papà* — sons of daddy. If daddy spends most of his time making money, shooting him is a good way of getting his attention. Under the absolutism there is poitance.

There have been bodies in that street before. As the Middle Ages gave way to the Renaissance, the Caetani, Rienzo called himself *figlio di Orsini* who fought the Caetani. Rienzo called himself *tribune* and reunited Rome for a few days. The great families used the Papacy to further their earthly ambitions. But ever since the fall of the old Empire the very idea of a renewed temporal hegemony had been an empty dream.

As Machiavelli bitterly noted, the Church, while not powerful enough to unite the country, was certainly powerful enough to

make sure nobody else did. Machiavelli's remarks on the topic remain pertinent today, when even the Christian Democrats are appalled at the prospect of a Pope who seems inclined on discrediting the legislature over the matter of abortion. The last thing the country needs is any more dividing. Italy's besetting weakness is government without authority. The result is not sweet anarchy but gun law.

YOU DON'T have to go all the way out to the Alban Hills in order to look down on Rome and discover it to be a small place. All you have to do is climb the Aven-

tine. What you can see from there is just about all there is. When Rome ceased to be the capital city of an international empire, it reverted to being a provincial town. Though it has been officially called so since 1870, it has never really become the capital of Italy — not the way London is the capital of England or Paris of France. Rome produces little. For a long time it has been a *consumers' town*. Even the Renaissance was produced in Florence and consumed in Rome. Bringing Michelangelo to Rome was like bringing Tolstoy to Hollywood.

Rome is a good place for madmen to dream of building em-

pires. It is a bad place from which to govern Italy. Mussolini chose the first option, with the inevitable consequences. The most recent of Rome's overlords, he left the fewest traces. Apart from the embarrassingly fine architecture of the EUR district out on the periphery, the city gives almost no indication that he ever lived. The Palazzo Venezia is, of course, still there. You can pick out the balcony from which he shouted to the crowds and the window behind which he left a light burning at night to encourage the notion that he never slept. Wealthy ladies used to visit him there, but by all accounts his technique as a lover was long on preliminary

But it's unfair on Rome to let the weather get you down. In spring and summer the fountains ionise the air to the point that even the third-rate expatriate American writers who infest the city feel themselves brimming over with creative energy. Yet even then you can detect the weariness beneath the fervour. No less afraid of dying than anybody else, I still like the idea of what Lucretius describes as the reef of destruction to which all things must tend, *spatio aetatis defessa restato* — worn out by the ancient lapse of years. But I don't want to see the reef every day.

The Spanish Steps were a cataract. Climbing them like an exhausted salmon, I passed the window of the room in which Keats coughed out the last hours of his short life with nothing to look at except a cemetery of time. No wonder he forgot his own vitality and declared that his name was writ in water. As he should have realized, the thing to do when you feel like that is to pack up and catch a plane home. Which I did.

Getting there: El Al, Alitalia and TWA fly direct Tel Aviv-Rome. Group fare from IL4,138 return. Sea fare (to Venice or Ancona) from \$148 (deck passage) to \$500 (deluxe cabin). □

Anthony Ellis (Oma)

## Conqueror's way into Sicily

SICILY was an impulse, which meant that instead of flying into Palermo or Catania, sensibly and economically on a package tour, we came in by sea. If you want to see the Sicily that has welcomed — or more often failed to repel — so many visitors down the ages, this has to be the right way to arrive.

The noblest entrance is between the mountains that flank Palermo, coming in at dawn on the Naples ferry. We used Syracuse, sailing past Ortygia Island, recalling past Greek glories and looking about for the temple that has been a cathedral for 13 centuries. For the pleasure of casual strolls about Ortygia, we stayed at the Grand Hotel for the minimum three days required for sightseeing, visiting the restored theatre, swimming and sailing nearby.

For company, we chose the Golden Ribbon Tours buses instead of hiring a car. You can pick up the three-times-a-week round guided tour (entrance fees paid) at Palermo, Agrigento, Syracuse or Taormina, stopping off as you please. One of the delights of Sicily is that so often when you make a stopover you can choose

between town or sea. At Taormina we chose the town, convenient for wandering and for evenings at the fine Greek theatre — where the stage has Etna for backdrop. Had we chosen the sea, a funicular ride away, there was the 5-star Mazza Sea Palace Hotel and innumerable small pensions.

Next stop was Cefalù, on the north coast — named after the head-shaped rock that towers over the town, but famous for Norman Roger II's cathedral, with its Byzantine mosaics.

PALERMO is a holiday in itself — as the royal families of Europe recognised in the past and winter-break operators like Pogaus recognise today.

Simply to gaze at the baroque extravagances of the teeming streets is entertainment enough, but there are also fine restaurants like the Charleston and the one in the Villa Igtea Hotel, night-spots, theatres, and a determined effort, including a January festival, to promote Palermo in its traditional role as a centre of culture. All of which sounds, and is, noisy even by Italian standards. We fled to Palermo-by-the-sea, Mondello,

A technician tests the strength of a well-known stone.

chest-beating and short on follow-through. It seems that he just hurled them to the floor and passed over them in a shallow dive.

The reason that the Empire could never be restored was that the world grew out of it. The Roman Empire did of success. It was already dying when Scipio Africanus became the first Roman Emperor died of success. It was a week. It was already dying when the legions in Sicily met their first Greeks and began learning the ways of cultivated leisure. Livy's history is one long lament for the old Republic — a warning to Augustus that the tribe's disciplined impulse was on the wane.

But Livy never saw that he himself was part of the problem. Nor did Tacitus at a later time. The city which had once been little more than a base camp had become a civilization. It was changing at the centre. The decline was really a transformation. The Empire became the Church, which became other churches, which became the Enlightenment, which became the modern age. The centurions became the priests who became us. With the eyes history has given us, we can now see that to unite the world is no longer a sane aim. It has already become united, within the individual soul.

Meanwhile the city of Rome is left with nothing but its heritage. There is a lot to look after. Things get stolen, or just fall apart. In the Piazza Navona I found the Bernini fountains plump with ice, like overfilled tubs of lemon gelato. In a dark alley behind the piazza stands the little church of Santa Maria della Pace. On the outside walls are the usual political graffiti. Inside there are some slybits by Raphael.

The doors are open only between 7 and 8.30 in the morning, for Mass. Outside the portico when I arrived, the body of a man was being hauled out of an abandoned car and loaded into a grey plastic bag. He was a tramp who had frozen to death in the night. A policeman signed for the corpse. Dirt, litter and decay. Raffaello Sanzio of Urbino was here once.

But it's unfair on Rome to let the weather get you down. In spring and summer the fountains ionise the air to the point that even the third-rate expatriate American writers who infest the city feel themselves brimming over with creative energy. Yet even then you can detect the weariness beneath the fervour. No less afraid of dying than anybody else, I still like the idea of what Lucretius describes as the reef of destruction to which all things must tend, *spatio aetatis defessa restato* — worn out by the ancient lapse of years. But I don't want to see the reef every day.

The Spanish Steps were a cataract. Climbing them like an exhausted salmon, I passed the window of the room in which Keats coughed out the last hours of his short life with nothing to look at except a cemetery of time. No wonder he forgot his own vitality and declared that his name was writ in water. As he should have realized, the thing to do when you feel like that is to pack up and catch a plane home. Which I did.

Getting there: El Al, Alitalia and TWA fly direct Tel Aviv-Rome. Group fare from IL4,138 return. Sea fare (to Venice or Ancona) from \$148 (deck passage) to \$500 (deluxe cabin). □

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## The Baal Shem Tov in Dracula country

RUMANIA is a poor man's Switzerland — physical beauty, excellent hotels, justly renowned cuisine, not to mention the spas. For those who say they have seen it all and especially those on tight Israeli budgets, the country is a revelation, with something for just about every taste. But if it's nightlife you're after and a pretty wench, forget it. It is, alas, good clean fun. In spite of the excellent wine and music that goes with it.

From Bucharest, we travelled to Ploesti which aroused no more than mild curiosity and on to Sinala, a gem set in the heart of the Bucegi plateau. This Carpathian resort is named after a monastery which in turn was named after the Sinal original by an impressed group of Rumanian pilgrims some seven or eight hundred years ago.

In Sinala, one can see the picturesque palace King Carol had built half way up a mountain — beamed walls, neogothic turrets, cathedral windows and fancy ironwork. Hotels there, with ski and cable lifts, were a visual delight. There was still skiing in May (at an altitude of just under 2,000 metres) and for those who prefer to ramble, there were special footpaths. Others came down the fast way, on their boards.

Stay away during the crowded winter and go to Brasov ringed by resorts. It was snowing when we came to Brasov's "Pirates' Den," a forest hideout whose beauty defies description. Two "ruffians" welcomed us with drawn swords and a slab of venison. We braced ourselves with fiery plum brandy in quaint porcelain jugs. An extraordinarily sumptuous meal followed.

NEXT STOP was Piatra Neamt in Moldavia, where we paid our respects to the Baal Shem Tov

ZE'EV SCHUL



(Israel ben Eliezer, founder of Hassidism, 1700-1760) at his synagogue. This alone was worth a visit but make sure you get there at *Shaharit* time and come with all your credentials. If you think the auspicious locals are going to fall around your neck and kiss you just because you come from Israel, think again.

This synagogue, in a complex of three, is tucked away in what once had been the town's Jewish quarter. Half the population had been Jewish at the turn of the century. Now there are barely enough left to form a morning minyan.

In the Besht synagogue, that of the Baal Shem Tov, we found Babylonian Talmuds (printed in Lemberg and Vienna early in the previous century) *mahsorim* and other books lying on the floor and on tables, stained by mildew. They fell apart at the touch.

When we had a private meeting with Rabbi Rosen in Bucharest, we spoke of this and he did not seem visibly touched. There was no way of getting the books out of Rumania to Jewish libraries, he said, as a recent law prohibited export of books printed before

1940 — "and that includes just about everything."

He asked why we had not investigated what was being done for the 40,000 Jews in Rumania — kosher restaurants, religious services and education. He said he had been instrumental in bringing most of the country's Tora scrolls to Israel (more than doubling the number in Israel).

One of the most scenic routes we have ever travelled leads to the "Red Lake" (Laou Resu), a geological freak which turns red at sunset, and like most lakes in this area, has a saline bed. The trip gave us gorges, narrow mountain passes, tumbling (trout-stocked) streams and endless forests all the way to Micorure Ciuc and other resort and spa areas.

For the curious, there is Dracula country. Vlad the Impaler, son of Vlad Drakulas (son of the Devil, they say) was a sadistic tyrant, who has been rehabilitated into a martial figure who respected the rights of women and children. But he thought little of throwing people down on a bed of spears — hence his appellation.

Accordingly, itineraries feature beauty spots and cultural sites, as well as evenings of folklore and glimpses of local lifestyles, whether in remote villages in the Philippines, the floating market in Bangkok or Chinese junks in Hongkong.

Tours also include many varied and fascinating stops, and visitors often have difficulty singling out one country as exceptionally striking. Most time, on Far East package tours, is spent in Japan, which generally serves as the focus of the trip.

The general manager of Natour, Ramon Kershner, says Japan is of particular interest to Israelis as it provides a striking contrast between modern and traditional lifestyles. Thus, on one day the tourists can visit Tokyo and the next take the "bullet train" — the fastest in the world — to visit Kyoto, the ancient capital.

Another highlight of the Far East tour for many Israelis is Nepal, with its peaceful, exotic atmosphere and breathtaking scenery.

IN ADDITION to the group tours, some Israelis visit the Far East on their own, either on business or to attend conferences. Because of language barriers, however, they usually prefer to make previous arrangements to join local, organized tours.

One visitor who did not have any language problems was Prof. Eli Katz, of the Hebrew University, who went to Japan last summer to attend an international conference on communications. Katz had been stationed in Japan 30 years ago as an American soldier and remembered enough Japanese to make his way around.

After the conference he and his family rented a car and drove along the Japanese sea coast, then travelled through the Inland Sea, which is dotted with hundreds of tree-covered islands, to Kyushu.

"The more you travel in Japan," he says, "the more there is to see."

MORE young Israelis are also travelling on their own to Japan and other points in the Far East. After learning a number of basic words, they are able to hitch-hike

## Bullet train to Kyoto

WITH increasing numbers of Israelis travelling to the FAR EAST, Hebrew is quite likely to be heard among the expressions of admiration by sightseers at such places as Kyoto, Kathmandu and Victoria Peak.

Although no official statistics are available, people in the travel business estimate that between 3,000 to 4,000 Israelis visit the Far East each year.

Most Israelis take organized tours, which usually last for a month and include stops in Japan, Taiwan, Hongkong, Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines, Nepal and India. The price of a typical trip ranges from IL40,000 to IL45,000, with meals (other than breakfast), special excursions and, of course, personal expenses extra.

Although the price seems high, travel agents claim that such a trip is cheaper than a 30-day tour of North America, and not much more expensive than a trip to Europe.

INTEREST in the Far East is a fairly recent phenomenon, and it is only within the past couple of years that Israeli travel agents have offered package tours. These appeal primarily to well-travelled Israelis who are seeking new sites and are curious about life at the "other end" of Asia.

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MORE young Israelis are also travelling on their own to Japan and other points in the Far East. After learning a number of basic words, they are able to hitch-hike



Kinkaku-ji temple. Built by Shogun Yoshimitsu Ashikaga in 1397, it was used as a villa for banquets.



The tea house of Kokedera temple is considered a national treasure.



Lake Onopawa, one of the many lakes in the Bandai National Park in northern Honshu (main island).

through Japan and to stay in youth hostels, Japanese-style inns and even Japanese homes. In this way, they not only see the country but also observe daily Japanese life at first hand.

With the closing of Teheran airport to aircraft from Israel, one of the main gateways to the Far East has been lost. Travel agents are reluctant to send groups from Israel to the Far East via Europe and India because the aircraft could be forced to make an emergency landing in an Arab country.

But there are at least two alternative routes — over the North Pole or through Kenya.

Even if these detours add to the cost of the trip, the extra travelling time and expense will undoubtedly prove worth while.

## Noh and Kabuki

THE fascinating blend of old and new in JAPAN is nowhere more evident than in the city of Kyoto, where it is not unusual to see *gelsa* women in elaborate kimonos and long-haired students in jeans passing each other on the sidewalk — only minutes away from the bustling, modern downtown area on the solitude of a rock garden in a Zen temple.

Kyoto's 1632 Buddhist temples and 241 Shinto shrines — many of which are famous for their architecture and artwork — do much to lend an aura of tranquillity. Indeed, it is hard to think of any other large city that provides so much valuable space for temples and gardens.

The Imperial Palace dominates the centre of the city, and although the emperor, who lives in Tokyo, visits the palace buildings only on rare ceremonial occasions, the immense grounds are always filled with children playing, cyclists, students and young couples.

The combination of old and new extends to Kyoto's cultural life. In addition to the colourful festivals that are celebrated throughout the year, and the regular performances of Noh and Kabuki plays, there are frequent concerts and exhibitions by well-known foreign artists.

And catering to Kyoto's large university population are many coffee houses featuring jazz and folk music.

As befits an ancient capital, Kyoto is still a centre for studying the tea ceremony, flower arrangement, calligraphy and the many other traditional handicrafts.

At the same time Kyoto, with a population of 1.5 million, has a large industrial area to the south of the city.

It also has much to offer nature lovers. There are tree-covered mountains on three sides, countless paths that invite hikers, as well as many picturesque villages on the outskirts of the city.

And whatever the season, there is something special to catch the eye — cherry blossoms in spring, fresh green bamboo in summer, burning red maple leaves in autumn and a thin layer of snow in winter.

With all these attractions, it is not surprising that over 17 million tourists, including 800,000 from abroad, visit Kyoto each year. □

Etienne Weinstein.

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Dragon dance at the Chinggy Procession, held in February.



A scene from the "Instant Asia" show.

# SPOTLESS SINGAPORE

WE STEP off the plane — from a freezing Australian winter to the steaming heat of Singapore — and enter an immense, immaculate passenger reception hall.

At the far end are the immigration and customs officials. Behind them is an army of bank tellers, airport personnel, porters and taxi drivers.

As we walk through the hall we are suddenly aware that we are the only passengers leaving the Rome-bound flight in Singapore. And it is four in the morning.

A natty young airport hostess approaches and politely insists on helping with overnight bags, children, formalities.

Our luggage from the plane is swiftly wheeled in and deposited before the customs official. One suitcase has evidently had enough: Spontaneously, a hinge snaps, tears off, and from a gaping hole there are underpants, shoes and shirts struggling to get out.

A young man steps forward, whips out a voucher which he fills in and hands to me: "Get yourself a new suitcase," he says. "And have a good time."

That is Singapore: spotlessly clean, super-efficient and always eager to please.

Four hours later, on our first bus tour of the city, we found out why. Driving down the wide, tree-lined boulevards (manned, if you can imagine manned boulevards), the guide vividly described the policy of the government of Singapore and, more specifically, the policies of the Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew.

Those caught littering — and that includes dropping a cigarette butt carelessly on the sidewalk — face heavy fines or an order to sweep the streets; for persistent litterers... well, it's the jailhouse. Relatively minor drug offenders are executed; that is frequently announced, that is frequently applied.

"So now," he concluded, "we do not have a drug problem any more!" Nor, quite obviously, a litter problem.

Indeed, travellers who entertain notions of a teeming, bustling metropolis of duty-free merchandise will be disappointed by



Getting away from it all... the island of Sentosa.

### DOUGLAS DAVIS

Singapore. Hongkong is the place for that.

IN CONTRAST to the shuk-like atmosphere of Hongkong, Singapore displays its comparatively inexpensive, high-quality wares in positively sanitary surroundings. The back streets and alleys are strictly for show.

The real business is done in a series of modern, concrete-and-glass, American pop-filled buildings that neatly accommodate the thousands of stores which deal in duty-free cameras, watches, stereos, tape decks, etc.

Nor will you find the hard bargaining that inevitably accompanies a purchase in Hongkong. The Singapore merchants might quote an initial price that is a little above what they are prepared to settle for, but quickly come down to their final price. The competition is fierce and they are after quick sales, not games.

If you do find a bargain — a product that is substantially below the prices quoted at other stores — beware. Fakes abound, and your \$200 bargain Olympus OM-2 camera could turn out to be an impressive, but worthless,

replica of the real thing. Hard bargaining does pay, however, in the clothes shops. Not those selling Dior or Cardin (real and fake), but those that take your measurements and deliver a tailor-made, well-fitting garment 24 hours later.

I bought a suit and three pairs of trousers of good-quality cloth for just over \$100. The secret here is in finding the correct permutation: A suit on its own would cost about \$80; a pair of trousers about \$25. Add them all together, haggle a little, and you could walk out well-dressed and well-pleased with the price. As the official guide book says, "Prices are very affordable."

Make sure the electrical goods you buy are designed for the voltage in Israel. Goods destined for American purchasers will prove to be useless here without expensive, often unreliable, unnecessary transformers.

And when you buy electrical goods, make sure, too, that you get a warranty from the dealer — an international warranty, that is; not one valid in Singapore only.

OF COURSE, there is more to Singapore than duty-free shopping. The country consists of a main island (41km long and 22km wide) and 54 smaller islands. The

vast majority of the population of 2.2 million (75 per cent Chinese; the rest mainly Malay, Indian and Pakistani) live on the main island in identical, endlessly tedious rows of apartment blocks that would make the Jewish Agency green with envy.

High-density accommodation has meant the elimination of slums and the development of beautiful parks, gardens and a nature reserve (about 20 minutes' drive from the city centre), where visitors can tramp along well-kept footpaths through jungle and tropical vegetation.

Most dramatic of the gardens is the Chinese Garden. Magnificent landscaped, it is based on the style of the Summer Palace in Peking and on the architectural traditions of the Sung Dynasty.

Also worth a visit is the Japanese Garden — the largest outside Japan — with its greenery, streams, stone lanterns and summer houses.

The Jurong Bird Park has an extraordinary collection of some 7,000 birds of 350 species, which sing and flash their plumage against a backdrop of tropical greenery and the world's largest man-made waterfall.

Of special interest to anyone visiting Singapore for the first time, particularly Somerset Maugham aficionados, is Raffles Hotel, which, while remaining a legend among hotels, is not among the most comfortable, well-appointed or centrally located in Singapore.

Another sight that is considered a "must" is the Tiger Balm Gardens, supposedly the Disneyland of the East. Here, one is confronted by a series of crude stone tableaux, many quite bizarre, that portray Chinese fairytales and mythology. I do not feel it adds greatly to the sum of aesthetic appreciation.

If you are taking organized tours (on comfortable, air-conditioned buses) you will hardly fall to see the "Instant Asia" cultural show, which features, according to the programme notes, "Songs, Dances and Costumes from Three Asian Cultures Plus Chinese Lion Dance, Indian Snake Charming Act and Excerpt From Chinese Opera."

All the performers — including the snake — appeared absolutely exhausted from the intense heat (or perhaps it was simply a form of artistic expression). For my part, "Instant Asia" is best instantly forgotten.

One particularly memorable outing was a visit to the resort island of Sentosa — beautiful sandy beaches, a swimming lagoon, an 18-hole golf course and a waxworks display of indifferent quality portraying the Japanese surrender of Singapore to the British during World War II.

Most spectacular was the ferryboat ride through the hundreds of ships banked up at the harbour entrance awaiting admission (Singapore has one of the busiest ports in the world) and the cable-car ride back from Sentosa which provided magnificent views of the main island.

Sentosa is an ideal place to relax, catch your breath and count your traveller's cheques as you ponder your next purchase.

ONE OF THE great delights of Singapore is the enormous variety of exotic foods and eating places that abound throughout the main island.

Being kosher, we were unable to sample the "100-Year-Old Eggs" (duck eggs wrapped in a paste of earth, rice husks and ash), "Chai Siew" (roast pork) or "Kai Chok" (chicken porridge).

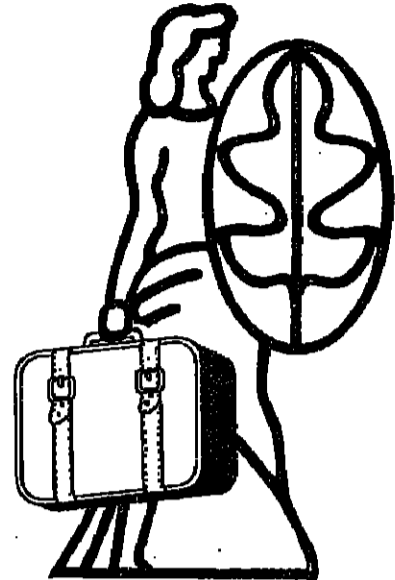
But we did order a chicken dinner for Shabbat from the caretaker of the local synagogue. The caretaker was Indian (not Jewish but strictly kosher, we were assured) and on Friday evening our chicken was duly delivered — naturally enough, in a piping hot curry sauce.

After a week of tinned sardines and matza (from Australia), we were keenly anticipating our kosher meal on the flight from Singapore to Tel Aviv; anticipating to the point of trying to guess what we'd be eating on the plane three days before we were due to leave.

Only problem was that when the plane eventually arrived, we discovered that Alitalia had forgotten to pack kosher meals for Family Davis. Pass the matza, please. □

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# Dull utopia

DOUGLAS DAVIS

AUSTRIAN artist Friederich Hundertwasser says he decided to move to NEW ZEALAND because it would be the last country in the world to be affected by a nuclear war. He is probably right.

Three hours' flight from Australia, its nearest major neighbour, New Zealand is far removed from the hectic pace of modern life and the pressure of Big Power politics.

It is, in fact, of little consequence to anyone except Britain (which would like to curtail imports of New Zealand mutton and butter), the Arab states (which are trying to fend off offers of similar trade), the Organization of African Unity (which would like to keep it out of international sporting activities because of its ties with South Africa) - and the 3.5 million people who live on the two islands that make up New Zealand.

It is also of consequence to off-beat travellers who are seeking an

escape from the "real world," a time of tranquillity and, perhaps, solitude.

The capital city of New Zealand is Wellington, at the southern tip of the North Island. But the main city is Auckland, the commercial centre and, with a population approaching a million, the largest centre of population concentration.

Yet even in the Big City, old-world courtesies prevail. And there is a keen sense of history (albeit very recent history) and a strong emphasis on retaining, in a physical form, the early character of the city.

Old houses, which date back little more than a century, are faithfully preserved as museums; old trees are reverentially tended.

Auckland also has the largest concentration of Maoris (the native inhabitants of New

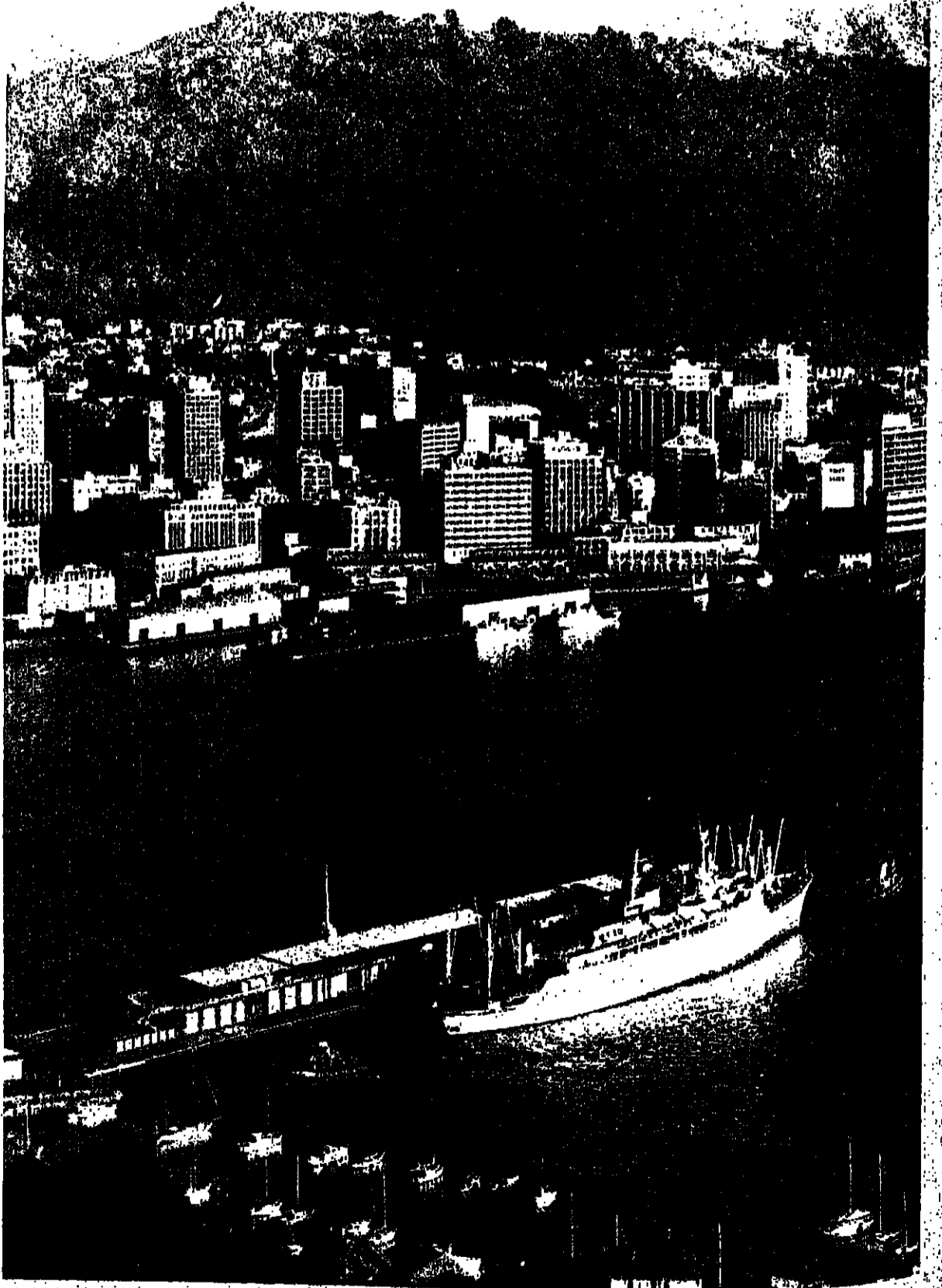
Zealand) and South Pacific Polynesians. The city's Jewish mayor, Sir Dove-Myer Robinson, proudly boasts that it is the largest Polynesian city in the world.

There is indeed a fine museum that contains an impressive collection of Polynesian artefacts, but there is little else - apart from the sheer number of Polynesians - to mark Auckland as particularly Polynesian.

Except for the fact that Polynesians, forming the bulk of the labouring class, tend to live in relative poverty - relative because, by international standards, there is virtually no poverty in New Zealand: There is a fairly even distribution of wealth; no one is hungry; no one without a roof over his head.

Nor are there physical threats, either internally or externally; and no serious political dissension, with both major political parties committed to the concept of the welfare state.

Yet, for all the physical security, the near-utopian life-style in New Zealand, there is little excellence. The single universally known New Zealander is a former beekeeper, Sir Edmund Hillary,



Wellington's natural harbour is almost completely enclosed by mountains.

who was the first to conquer Mount Everest.

Scientifically, New Zealand is a paradise. North of Auckland is the Bay of Islands, site of the first European settlement in the mid-19th century. Here, too, are excellent bathing and boating facilities and, of particular interest to Americans, big-game fishing.

South of Auckland is the thermal region of Rotorua, a town which smells constantly like a rotten egg factory, the result of sulphurous fumes emanating from bubbling mudpools and steaming geysers. Some hotels in the town offer accommodation with private natural hot pools attached.

Nearby are the Waitomo Caves, with spectacular formations of stalagmites and stalactites. Boats take visitors into a huge underground cavern alight with thousands of glow-worms.

Also nearby is Taupo, a centre for trout-fishing enthusiasts.



Pohutu Geyser, Rotorua

But the real attractions of New Zealand are the skiing facilities - Mount Ruapehu in the North Island and Mount Cook in the South.

In contrast to the gently rolling hills of the North Island, the South Island is synonymous with water, soaring snow-capped mountains, fjords, waterfalls, lakes and deserted beaches.

Another major attraction of the South Island is the Heaphy Track, which offers a rugged five-day tramp through native bushland. You sleep in primitive chalets along the route and carry your own food in backpacks.

The main cities of the South Island are Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill, the southernmost city in the world.

Perhaps because of its tranquillity and isolation, New Zealand attracts a surprising number of Israeli visitors. They are always assured of a warm welcome by the local Jewish community, one of the smallest and most far-flung in the world. □

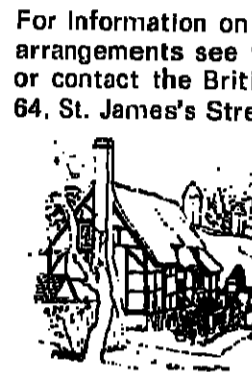
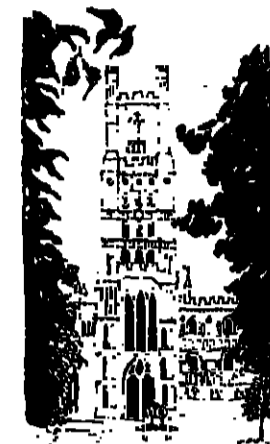
## Britain is full of fascinating places - London is only one of them.

Lovely, uncluttered and uncrowded Scotland where tough but charming clans produce their unmatched homespun tweed, tartans, and, of course, Whisky. Edinburgh, the capital, is an absolute "must" for people with a taste for beauty.

The Lake District with its fascinating beauty and serenity is the ideal setting for utter relaxation.

The beauty of Wales and Cornwall inspired great poets, not to mention picturesque Stratford-upon-Avon where Shakespeare gained immortality.

Britain with its famous hospitality, tradition, beautiful scenery and historic sites can truly offer you whatever you are looking for.



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**GOLD REPUBLIC**

**SOUTH AFRICA**, at the tip of the African continent between the Atlantic on the west and the Indian Ocean on the east, covers an area of nearly half a million square miles and contains some beautiful landscapes.

Johannesburg, whose "foundations are made of gold," is the gateway to South Africa for most tourists arriving by air. It is far from being a "typical" tourist destination, for Johannesburg is a city of high-rise buildings, first-class hotels, eateries and stores filled with an abundance of the very latest merchandise.

Cape Town, is undoubtedly one of the world's most beautiful cities, the older section spreading between Table Mountain (which rises some 3,500 feet above sea level) and the Table Bay. Within a square mile of Cape Town there is more historic architecture than in any other part of the country.

Dozens of first-class restaurants feature tempting local dishes — and, of course, there are light, well-flavoured South African wines to accompany the meal.

The 17th-century Castle, the Trafalgar Place flower market and the flea market are the main tourist attractions.

**FROM** Cape Town, travelling along the Garden Route to Port Elizabeth, the area is extraordinarily beautiful, with the road curving between the sea and the mountains, forests and beaches.

Port Elizabeth is the fifth largest city and has the third largest port. It has excellent beaches. Driving on through Grahamstown, founded by British settlers over 100 years ago, one reaches Durban, the most popular all-year-around resort town, offering a variety of entertainment.

A special favourite is the popular horse racing track, but men tend to find the attractive hillside beauties on Durban beaches enough to satisfy their aesthetic needs.

North of Durban is exciting Zululand, more than 10,000 square miles of nature reserve surrounded by hills and lush fertile plains.

The Drakensberg range, which stretches some 600 miles between the coast and Johannesburg, includes the Maluti Mountains of the Orange Free State and the Golden Gate Highlands National Park. These are very popular with tourists and there are many country hotels and nature reserves complete with huts.

Kimberley, which lies on the edge of the Great Karoo, boasts the largest man-made excavations. Here are the diamond mines which made the area world famous.

Getting there: El Al and SAA fly to Johannesburg. Group fare IL13060 return, 12 Baruch Saville

THIS IS no place for false modesty. In 1934 I won the Standard Three art prize for my painting of Prestatyn, even though I'd never been to the seaside.

This wasn't as odd as it sounds; half my competitors in the class had never been to the seaside either.

They couldn't afford it. Some of the kids in our street always wore several partings in their hair because the household mirrors had long ago been pawned and Matty, my pal from next door, would occasionally drop in with odd requests like, "Could you lend me Mam half a loaf and please will you cut it with a jammy knife?"

Of course, there were a number of snobs in the street who pretended to go away for their holidays and, it was rumoured, Lily Shineberg the grocer's daughter, had once been on a cruise. No one else in the street had ever been abroad except in uniform to fight to make the world a place fit for heroes to live in.

NEVERTHELESS, as my art prize proved, I was thoroughly conversant with the seaside — from the Spectacle Seaside Holiday Numbers of *Comio Cuts*, *Tiger Tim's Weekly* and *P4m Fun*. Tiger Tim and Porky's adventures always took place in a perfectly recognizable comic resort, packed with bathing machines, large crabs clamped to big toes, cliffs, smugglers' coves, donkey rides, peg-legged old salts, grinning starfish, cookie-stalls, half-eroded sandcastles flying Union Jacks, piers with "What the Butler Saw" machines and, out on the dancing little waves, jaunty sailing ships taking trippers "Twice Around The Lighthouse Back In Time for Tea."

**BUT LANCASHIRE'S** Blackpool remains the archetypal seaside resort for me.

In the first three days of the war, Blackpool took in 37,500 evacuees. I imagine that 37,494 were well settled in before a grudging landlady in Lincoln Avenue, agreed to accept me and five other Jewish boys from the Manchester Central High School. It was a miserable time for all of us. Far from being the famous seaside place "that's noted for fresh air and fun" in Marriott Edgar's famous monologue, Blackpool was more like a Graham Greene novel. The amusements were all boarded up, scraps of litter blew along the almost deserted streets and the autumn tides pounded at the sea wall, drenching the promenades. The only thing to relieve the gloom was a confused BBC announcer who informed us on September 6, that we were about to hear "dance music played by Victor Sylvester and his Bathroom Orchestra."

**SOME YEARS** later, after fighting a long, losing battle with rheumatic fever, I was adjudged a suitable case for charity and the family was packed off to Blackpool for four days. I gazed on the real sea with a wild surmise, though hardly like stout Cortez since, as a waspish neighbour once observed, it was only the knots in my bootlaces that prevented me from slipping down the grids.

The real sea wasn't costly confined to one of the four-colour frames of *Comio Cuts*; it was vast, empty — at once infinite and eternal, frightening and exhilarating. Charlie Chaplin wrote in his autobiography of a similar experience: "My first sight of the sea was hypnotic — a live, quivering monster." So you see, dear reader, even scruffy urchins are capable of experiencing the same intimations of immortality which inspired Wordsworth:

"Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
Which brought us hither..."  
And it didn't half make a noise.

**SINCE THEN** I have spent many days by the sea and visited all the fashionable Edwardian watering-places (though long after Edward and Mrs. Langtry packed up and went home): Biarritz, Nice, Cannes, Capri, Cap Ferrat, Venice, Southend... On the other hand I'm often too early. I once spent some time at St. Tropez before it went topsy.

I've slept in abandoned German gun emplacements on the Atlantic Wall, visited Captain Cook's house and the Great Tempest

**BESIDE THE SEA**

ALEX BERLYNE

Prognosticator in Whitby and walked along the shore of Killala Bay, in County Mayo, where the French troops came ashore in '98.

I've snoeked among the great submerged ashlars of Caesarea's ancient harbour, nearly drowned in Ashkelon and watched the boys dive for coins from the walls of Crusader Acre. But the only time I remembered Wordsworth was while wandering along the deserted Red Sea shore south of Dahab where the enormous eroded seashells recreate the prehistoric sequences in Stanley Kubrick's 2001.

I've always tried to remember, however, the advice written in 1887 by Mrs. C.E. Humphrey in her book on *Manners*:

"It ought to be part of our patriotic feeling to endeavour to convey as agreeable an idea as possible of ourselves to those countries which we honour with our distinguished presence in our little trips."

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tion were made. We were squeezed in together with a local school and shared assemblies from time to time, which led to some misunderstandings. The Blackpool children had always been addressed by their first names, while we were usually known to our teachers by our surnames and quite often by coarse epithets.

The Blackpool headmaster once spotted one of his boys talking during prayers. "Nell!" he thundered, and 1,200 Central High School boys solemnly knelt.

**MY OWN LANDLADY** was nothing like Joey Beaumont's. She was a fearsome ogre who kept us on short rations and imagined we were trying to seduce her singularly unattractive daughter, who, in fact, nightly laid siege to the callow, terrified lumps in her mother's charge.

With hindsight, I can sympathise with our landlady's plight. Practically overnight, she had been forced to take in lodgers at her mother's charge.

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Central Pier. "Cor," says one, "look at your feet, they ain't half mucky."

"Well," says the other. "We didn't have no holiday last year."

Historians have paid little attention to the rise of seaside resorts, the fastest growing towns in 19th century England, nor have they dealt with the dynamic growth of this service industry, and Mr. Walton's book is an important contribution to a neglected area of social history. However, I can't help feeling that he is conducting a losing campaign against the uncountable jokes which add to the stereotype he's attempting to dismantle, as well as films like Grace Field's *Sing As We Go*, released in 1934, and books like those of Langford Saunders, an early 20th century Blackpool writer.

Saunders told of one landlady who had been laying it on a bit thick about her widowhood while preparing to charge two hapless Bolton visitors for an unused crust. One of the guests thought she'd detected tears in only one of the landlady's eyes and the other agreed: "Lonladies at the seaside are that road; they keep one e'e wi' a tear or two ready for sympathy, but they keep t'other awlwh dreigh for business purposes."

There was a gag about landladies current even among the hapless evacuees. "Excuse me," says the boy, "but this rissole is so tough I can't even cut it."

"I can't bring you another," says the landlady. "You've bent it."

**SOME** of the breed aspired to be up-market, not so much like Gemma Jones in *The Duchess of Duke Street* but more like John Cleese's portrait of an autocratic social climber catering to the middle class guests of *Fawlty Towers*. These were to be found around St. Anne's (there is even one who advertises that the cook used to be chef to the King of Roumania), and they inspired jokes like the one in which the guest asks, "Where's the chambermaid?"

"Ay haven't the faintest idea," says the landlady. "Most of our crockery is made in Staf-fordshah."

It was one of these genteel types who issued the famous prospectus which announced, "Guests' dogs are charged 1s or 1s 6d per day according to size and social standing."

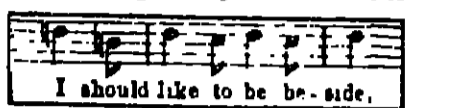
**THE GROWTH** of the industry is also examined in James Walvin's recent *Beside The Seaside* (Allen Lane, £5.75). Because of the slump of the 1880s, investment in non-industrial outlets looked singularly attractive to capital and so the seaside resorts expanded rapidly. In addition the passing of Gladstone's 1844 Railway Act put an end to a situation (not unlike that of the airlines till recently) where no allowance had been made for a mass, low-income passenger market. Following the provision of cheap excursion tickets, the problem of Sabbath travel had to be solved (now that has a familiar ring to it), and *Punch* observed sarcastically: "Toll and hardship are their portion during the week and enjoyment on the Sunday would make them discontented with their lot."

Eventually the resorts became the mass entertainment and holiday centres of the between-the-war period with their special seaside seediness which is composed of an amalgam of candy floss, seaside rock, false noses, hats inscribed "Kiss Me Quick" and hemispherical cups bearing

the legend "You said only half a cup."

But there is a raw healthy vulgarity in the mixture, part of the great tradition which threw up painters like Thomas Rowlandson or Music Hall artists like Marie Lloyd ("A little Bit of What Yer Fancy Does Yer Good").

**NOW THE FIRST** thing anybody who fancied himself to be a bit of a card did, after going for a paddle or exposing his lily-white frame to



the sea breezes, was to announce to friends and family back home that "I'm here and you're there." This was done by sending off a bunch of picture postcards of unbelievable vulgarity, and these were usually the work of Donald MacGill.

Oddly enough, the seaside picture postcard jokes were really removed from the mainstream of Lancashire humour. A typical Lancashire joke (which would need a diagram to explain it to a Southerner) runs like this:

Wife: "So you're home. How did you get here?"  
Husband: "By tram."  
Wife: "But trams don't come this far."  
Husband (with tremendous dignity): "I'm not without influence in Pudsey."

MacGill's humour, on the other hand, was based on a world of midget males and gigantic steatopygic females. Girls are forever finding themselves in deep water, frustrated swains cry "It's hard when I think of you," and sweethearts write love-letters with "a lot of kisses on the bottom."

**PUNS** run riot: "Enjoy yourselves like Ellen B. Merry," says one card while another, more earnestly, MacGill jokes goes: "She's a nice girl. She don't drink, she don't smoke, and she only swears when it slips out."  
They were never pornographic. As Bony Green pointed out in his book on the seaside postcard *I've Lost My Little White Arrow* (Arrow, £2.80), "The human being doesn't exist who could ever be sexually excited by the art of MacGill and company."

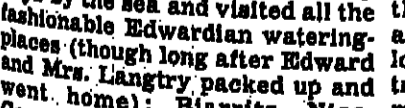
No, they are never stimulating, just plain rude. Chap to girl who's trying to get a cat which is hiding under her car: "Yes, Miss Cox, I can see a little fluffly thing under your Mini."

**DONALD MACGILL'S** daughter, quite literally a colonel's lady, is at pains to point out that she's not

at all like Judy O'Grady under the skin. She told the press a year or so ago, when MacGill originals started fetching £100 and up, "When we went to the seaside we didn't send cards which were Daddy's. We sometimes liked to see if they were there but we didn't send that kind — only the views."

In September 1977, one of the blue plaques which mark the London houses of famous people was unveiled on MacGill's former home in Blackheath. He thus joined Van Gogh, Constable and Whistler but, in deference to the essential character of the "Leonardo of the Golden Mile," the unveiling ceremony did not utilize the usual pair of velvet curtains.

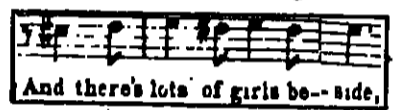
The plaque was covered by a pair of frilly knickers. □



I'll be be-side my-self with glee

sea was hypnotic — a live, quivering monster." So you see, dear reader, even scruffy urchins are capable of experiencing the same intimations of immortality which inspired Wordsworth:

"Our souls have sight of that immortal sea  
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And it didn't half make a noise.



And there's lots of girls be-side,

fraction of her usual rate, the rate on which her livelihood depended. John K. Walton, a lecturer in history at Lancaster University, has recently published *The Blackpool Landlady: A Social History* (Manchester University Press, £5.95), in which he examines the stereotype of popular legend, "the fearsome comic postcard type of person."

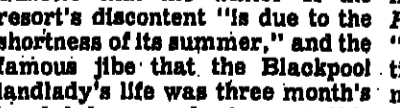
In popular mythology, says Walton, the typical landlady "is large and shapeless... well past her first youth... with hair in curlers and feet in carpet slippers. She sometimes has an insignificant little husband, long cowed into submission" who does odd jobs about the house. She is a disciplinarian to her boarders, squeezes them in like sardines and extracts money from them through unexpected surcharges, like demanding an extra shilling for sauce or the "crust."

Trafford Clegg, a Rochdale dialect writer, brought out some of these unamiable attributes in a sketch which appeared in the *Rochdale Observer* in 1890: "The parlour table holds five — three long way and two across... Last summer we were rather pushed so I fitted a board over the scullery sink for two youngsters to sleep on and swung a hammock in the cellar steps with a breadth of carpet and the clothes line. It was the coolest place in the house, so I charged sixpence extra for it."

**WALTON POINTS OUT** that the whole season consisted of a few short weeks from Burnley Fair in early July to Oldham Wakes in early September, with a few hectic days at Whitsuntide and a brief flurry of activity at Easter. Hence the remark in the *Blackpool Gazette* that the winter of the resort's discontent "is due to the shortness of its summer," and the famous jibe that the Blackpool landlady's life was three months' hard labour and nine months' solitary confinement.

Even the stereotype of strict regimentation had its justification, points out Mr. Walton, for landladies were often faced with visitors who, to say the least of it, were "hardly house-trained." An old joke illustrates the problem. Two urchins were paddling near

Central Pier. "Cor," says one, "look at your feet, they ain't half mucky."



I'll be be-side my-self with glee

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PLANNING a motoring trip abroad? Have fun, but think hard before you make up your mind.

## MOTORING ABROAD

Not that there is anything to be afraid of, apart from taking the wrong sort of technical decisions, according to Bruce Yacobi, general secretary of the Automobile and Touring Club of Israel, known by its Hebrew acronym, MEMSI. Here's some of the good advice he gave us:

First of all, make up your mind how you want to travel — rent a car when you've crossed the Mediterranean, go camping in a caravan, or maybe take your own along with you.

If you are one of the few who needn't worry about penny-pinching and for whom an error of a thousand dollars or so in your calculations isn't going to spoil the fun, then forget about all the rest and go right ahead — and bon voyage to you.

For most of us, however, a mistake can be a serious matter. And

if there are budgetary considerations there's only one way to tackle the problem: the right way.

For example: were you thinking of picking up some bargain secondhand cutie in one of those bunting-decorated automobile graveyards that can restore the lustre even to a White Steamobile? Forget it, says Mr. Yacobi.

You will be one of several hundred thousand who hope to be able to pick up similar bargains. Don't — unless you are a competent mechanic and can tell one *shepkeleingumelach* from another, you're going to be sorry.

MEMSI suggests that as a last resort (and member), you contact one of the affiliated clubs it has all over Europe and ask for its assistance and objective opinion.

Alternatively, get an independent one.

If you're going to stay for more than one and a half months, buying yourself a car makes sense. Here's MEMSI's authoritative opinion:

Unless you are a financial wizard, importing your own car from Europe is going to end up more expensive than buying it from the local representative, no matter how you go about it. But after deducting what it would have cost you to hire a car for six weeks, buying your own does make sense. Better still if you buy a "post-season" car in the United States — that is to say when next year's models are already on display. The brief period lasts from fall into winter each year.

BRUCE YACOBI'S second cau-

tion refers to renting a car. This would start somewhere around \$150 a week say for a Fiat 127, or \$20 per day. But watch where you take it. It'll cost you an extra 18 per cent (if Dutch, rented in Holland) for every day you stay in the country, but only an added 1.7 per cent for every day beyond the borders of the Netherlands. Ask the Dutch why.

MEMSI recommends renting a car for inter-urban driving only. Me, I'd rather walk than ever again be caught trying to find a place to park in London at 11 a.m. on a sunny weekend.

Then there's alternative number three of taking your car with you. Yacobi believes that you'd be breaking even if you intend to use the car for at least five weeks abroad. Insurance should account for roughly the equivalent of 10 days' hire of a similar-sized car. Add about \$200 (the equivalent of another 10 days' hire) for transporting your car to

Europe, and a similar amount for sundries. Then estimate a margin for unexpected items like comprehensive insurance, including its full Israeli value (taxes and all).

You may encounter some reluctance on the part of your insurance agency to issue a "green card." The information is that some 21 (which means practically all) of the major Israeli insurance companies are entitled to issue them, but are loth, for reasons of their own, to do so. So we recommend putting the squeeze on the company you have all your dealings with, and waiting for results. It should cost between \$5 and 48 per cent of your annual insurance premium for a month's driving abroad.

Official translations of your car's papers are a must, and you'll find MEMSI well-equipped to be of assistance to you — including an assortment of up-to-date road maps and general information.

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...or in Paris

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If you plan driving abroad — in your own car, a rented one (at a very nice discount through us) or even in a vehicle purchased overseas — you can count on efficient, practical help from any of the hundreds of automobile clubs with which MEMSI is affiliated. Yes, for emergency repairs on the road, suggestions on what to see, recommended hotels and motels, camping arrangements and much more, there's an address to turn to wherever your travels take you.

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## Travelling with kids

HELEN DAVIS

THE WORST flight I ever experienced was a harrowing eight hours from London to Lusaka, with three children in the row behind me yelling, throwing food and kicking seats.

And I once endured the disconcerting gaze of an unblinking preschooler for most of the flight between Honolulu and San Francisco. As the plane began its descent, she announced in a clear, carrying voice, "Funny lady," and burst into peals of mirth. Very funny.

But if I complained about the noise and nuisance of other people's offspring on planes before I had children, I've had plenty of reason to eat my words since.

Our son, Ben, was not quite two when we first took him travelling. He is now a comparatively civilized five. But he has an unruly two-year-old sister, Naomi. And on our most recent trip — a three-week journey from New Zealand to Israel via Australia and Singapore — I complicated matters further by being seven months pregnant.

But we survived — and actually enjoyed the trip. Which is more than I can say for many of the harassed parents we encountered en route.

THERE are a few simple rules for travelling successfully with small children. We learned the hard way.

Rule 1. Jetison before departure all the illusions of glamour that advertising men have built around air travel. Not for you the leisurely meal, the quiet nap, the good book. Travelling parents tend to eat in shifts, with one elbow planted firmly on the flip-down table to prevent a small foot from depositing the *cordon bleu* on the carpet. Parents at 35,000 feet are lucky if they sleep at all.

Rule 2. Forget about looking smart. Smart is not for parents on the move, who must keep their gaze firmly on survival. Which means wearing comfortable clothes that don't wrinkle or stain too easily.

Rule 3. Set out strong and well-rested, for you are about to become beasts of burden. We stagger aboard planes with our children and a mountain of gear.

Rule 4. Avoid queues whenever possible and try to be among the

lambskin rugs (on which our children sleep and which represent instant security). Ben's Teddy and Naomi's Dog-Dog, changes of clothing and spare nappies, assorted storybooks and toys.

Rule 4. Carry along a good supply of food. We take sandwiches, plain biscuits, raisins, cheese, fruit and plastic bottles of juice. Children paying only a percentage of the regular fare are not always entitled to meals — and they need to eat. We have also found that during flights at night, the children often fall asleep before the meals are served or else reject the food as being too exotic (though there was the time out of Hongkong when Ben cleaned up both our meals and left us famished). Food is a great pacifier. When there's a delay before take-off or when ears are hurting during landing, there is nothing like a snack to take small minds off their worries — and unblock ears.

Rule 5. Carry a bottle of "knock-out" potion. Our doctor prescribed one for putting over-tired, overstimulated children to sleep. It works like a charm on Naomi, although she has rarely needed it. But Ben, at two, became even more boisterous and fractious under the influence. If that happens, you can always take a swig or two of the stuff yourself.

Rule 6. Take a bag of "surprises," a few inexpensive baubles to produce at critical moments. Most airlines present children with little gifts — from jigsaws to chess sets. But on long flights, boredom quickly leads to Awful Behaviour and a "surprise" from mother's bag can work wonders at such times.

Rule 7. If possible, travel at times that will not disrupt your child's sleeping pattern. And on long flights, select a route with not too many intermediate stops. It is maddening to get children off to sleep only to have them woken by frequent landings and take-offs.

Rule 8. Never leave for the airport without first confirming that your flight is on time. There are few tortures more exquisite than chartered children around airport lounges for hours on end while we try to keep a close watch on our luggage.

Rule 9. Avoid queues whenever possible and try to be among the

first aboard the plane, if only to claim a supply of pillows and blankets, which are invariably in short supply. If the flight is fully booked, you could find yourself without any padding for the child who will, hopefully, be asleep on your lap for hours.

Rule 10. Don't be shy about colonizing — promptly and firmly — any spare seats in your vicinity. On my first trip with Ben, I hesitated about taking over three spare seats and was rewarded for my diffidence by the sight of a lanky youth stretched out comfortably on those seats from Ball to Bombay — while I shared a single one with Ben.

Rule 11. Don't expect too much help from the cabin crew. Most try to be helpful, but the task of feeding and watering a jumbo-load of passengers is never-ending and leaves the stewardess little time for playing tic-tac-toe with the kids.

Rule 12. If, on the other hand, you encounter a stewardess who clearly resents small passengers, avoids your attempts to attract her attention and ignores you like the plague, don't be intimidated. If necessary resort to a dive tackle or nasty scene.

TO MY MIND, the worst part of flying is on the ground — slogging through customs and baggage clearance at the end of your flight. I have no rule for survival here, and I doubt if there is anything to be done other than gritting your teeth.

Equally, there is little to be done about the fact that time-zone changes play havoc with a young child's sleeping habits. Naomi insisted, both while we were travelling and for about a week after we arrived, on waking at 2 a.m., hungry for breakfast and raring to go. It's interesting to push a buggy around Singapore at that hour, but better to be in bed.

Try not to let the child sleep too much during the day; use the "knock-out" potion to get the occasional good night's sleep; and wallow in self-pity until the problem rights itself.

Above all, don't be afraid to take the kids along. You'll need patience and a sense of humour, and even so there will be times — under siege in some foreign transit lounge — when you'll wonder whether it is all worth while. It is. In years to come you'll look back and count them among the best days of your life. □

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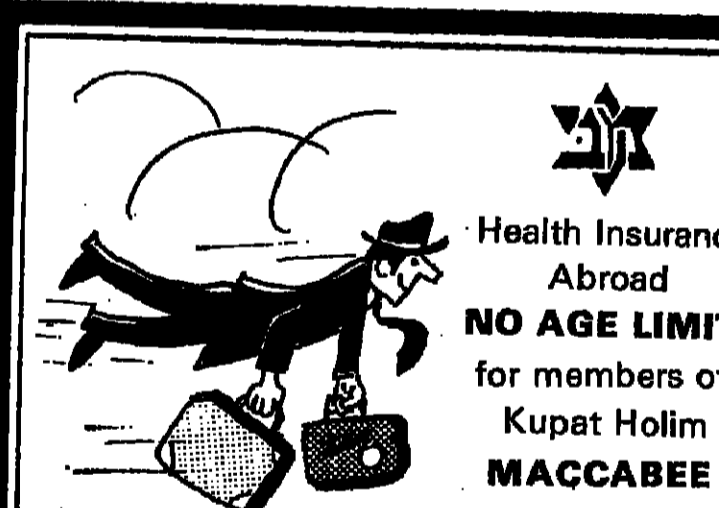
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